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ABSTRACT

This idea resource booklet (in the format of an illustrated school-year calendar) is designed to be used by teachers in developing programs for preschool children. The developmental and seasonal activities included follow a progression from simple to complex. Suggestions for modifying many of the activities to each child's level of development are given. The activities are cross-indexed under developmental purposes, and are designed to provide a balance between free play and structured guidance, active and quiet experiences, large and small group and individual activities within a flexible schedule. Each activity is described, including the materials needed. Bibliographies of recommended books and records for children and recommended reading for teachers are included. (Author/ED)

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CALENDAR

of

DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

FOR PRESCHOOLERS

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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by

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Sam Cangemi, Fifty Tactile and Perception Games (Continuing Education Publications, 1972.)

Pauline C. Peck, "Sounds" My Weekly Reader (Xerox Educational Publications, 1969.)

Evelyn Sharp, Thinking is Child's Play (E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1969.)

Clara Ellen Spelman, "Witches and Owls," Music For Living Through The Day (Silver Burdett Company, 1972.)

Jeanne Walton, Logical Mathematical Thinking and the Preschool Classroom (Head Start Regional Resource and Training Center, 1974.)

Follett Publishing Co. for "Rosa's Having a Birthday," an Old Dutch folktune, Music Round About Us, 1974.

Educational Research Council of America, The Child Begins to Know His World.

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FROM ONE TEACHER TO ANOTHER

In the preschool years, the child comes into his own as a thinking person. He learns to talk and listen, to create and share, to compare and make judgments, to ask questions and find answers, to feel good about himself and to like people. He learns more during this five year period than at any other time in his life and he takes great joy from the learning.

But he is also unique! There is not another child anywhere with exactly his set of qualities. General health, family, intellectual endowment, opportunities for experience are all factors that influence his development. To the child, each newly mastered skill is a major achievement. The understanding teacher will share in the child's enthusiasm and offer many opportunities for success. She will approach the child with acceptance, search for his strengths and weaknesses, plan a program based on the child's level of development and use materials the child will enjoy.

John Holt has eloquently expressed my teaching philosophy:

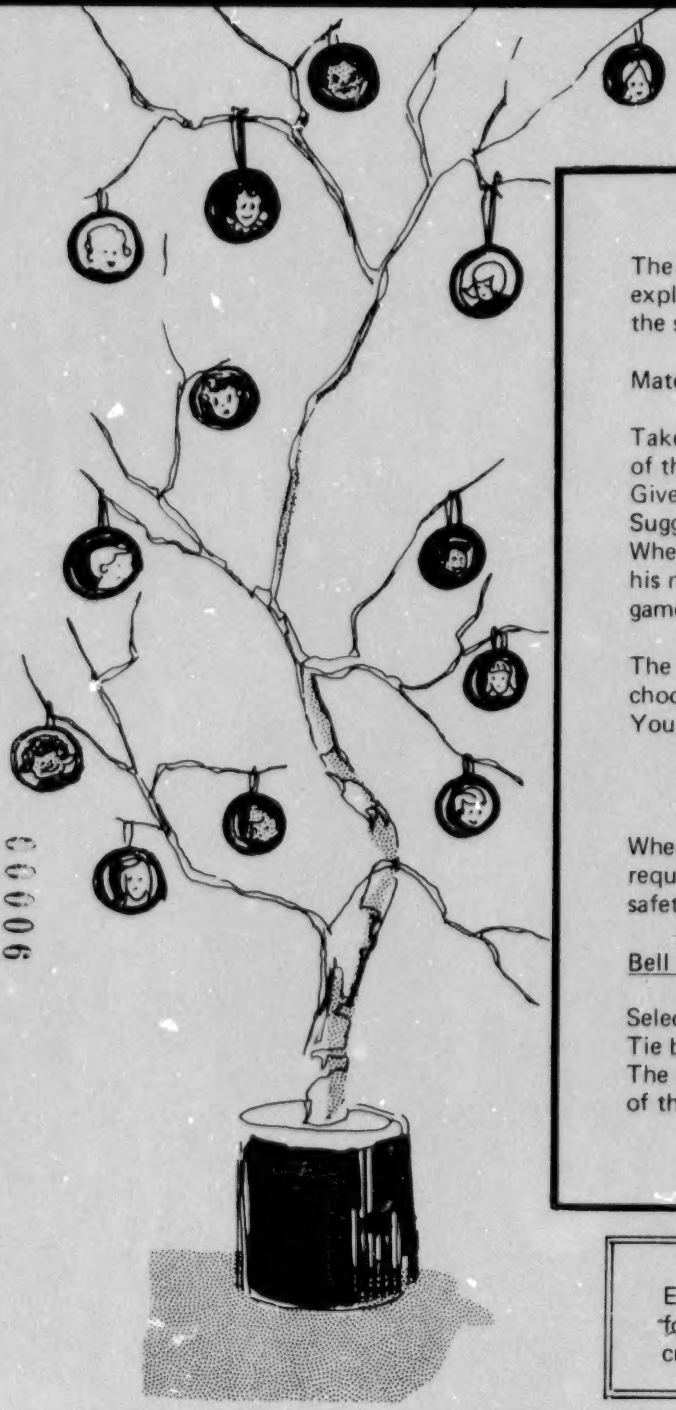
> We can think of ourselves not as teachers, but as gardeners. A gardener doesn't "grow" flowers he tries to give them what he thinks will help them grow, and they grow by themselves. A child's mind, like a flower, is a living thing. We can't make it grow by sticking things on it anymore than we can make a flower grow by glueing on leaves and petals. All we can do is surround the growing mind with what it needs for growing.

The Calendar of Development Activities for Preschoolers is meant to be an idea resource book, not a curriculum guide to be followed rigidly. The activities are presented within a hierarchy of learning. In most instances, the more elementary activities are presented in the fall months and the more complex ones in the spring. Suggestions are given for modifying many of the activities to the child's level of development. You may find it appropriate to use an April activity in November or vice versa because of the variation in age and ability of the children in your classroom. The criteria for selecting an activity should be based on whether the child has mastered the prerequisite skills so that his new learning experience will bring success and not frustration. The calendar format is simply a convenient way to present the developmental activities and to locate the seasonal ones. The activities are cross-indexed under developmental purposes in the Index (pages 84 88). Although you may select an activity to meet the needs of just one child, it may be used with several or all of the children for different purposes.

A balance between free play and structured guidance, active and quiet experiences, large group, small group, and individual activities will permit the children to discover order and pattern within a flexible schedule.

These activities are offered in the hope that you will truly enjoy each child as you guide his growth toward becoming a well balanced individual.

Weslee D'Audney



SEPTEMBER

WHO ARE YOU?

The first few days of preschool should be a friendly, informal time during which the children explore freely, try out the inviting materials, and get acquainted with their classmates and the staff.

Materials: Polariod camera and film.

Take Polariod pictures of each child, the aides and helpers in the classroom. Arrange the pictures of the children on a table and let the children try to find their own. (Help them if they can't.) Give them time to hold and study their pictures, show them to their friends and compare them. Suggest a game of "Who Are You?" Play some lively music as the children march in a circle. When the music stops, they are to ask the child nearest, "Who Are You?" The child answers with his name and shows his picture. Play until most of the children have met or they tire of the game.

The next day, give a child a picture of another child. As the other children march by, he is to choose the one whose photo he has. If he doesn't know the child's name, he asks "Who Are You?"

AUDITORY PERCEPTION

When an infant turns his head to search for the source of sound, he has learned one of the pre-requisites for language development. Good listening habits are important for both language and safety.

Bell the Cat. Materials: Bells

Select one child to be blind-folded and have the rest of the children form a circle around him. Tie bells onto the wrist and ankle of one child in the circle. Have the children walk around. The blindfolded child must catch the belled child. When caught, that child moves to the center of the circle and has a turn as the blindfolded "it."

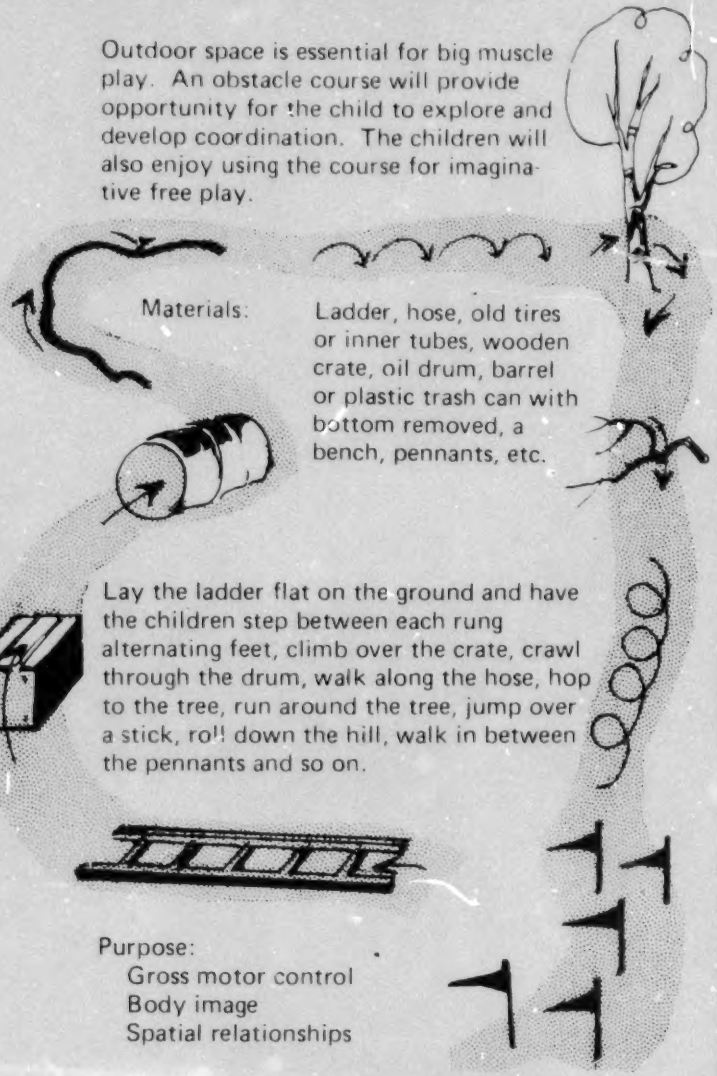
Purpose: Sound Localization

A CLASSROOM TREE

Every classroom should have a tree. Look for an interesting branch and plant it in a crock or large coffee can filled with plaster of Paris. The larger the tree, the easier it is for young hands to decorate it with seasonal handiwork.

OUTDOOR OBSTACLE COURSE

Outdoor space is essential for big muscle play. An obstacle course will provide opportunity for the child to explore and develop coordination. The children will also enjoy using the course for imaginative free play.



Materials: Ladder, hose, old tires or inner tubes, wooden crate, oil drum, barrel or plastic trash can with bottom removed, a bench, pennants, etc.

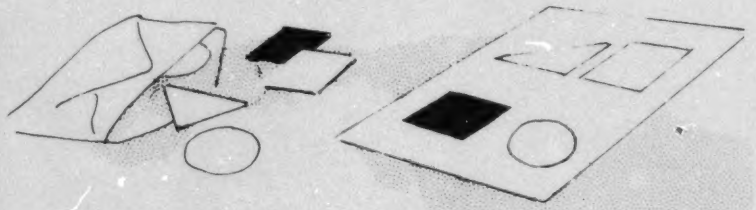
Lay the ladder flat on the ground and have the children step between each rung alternating feet, climb over the crate, crawl through the drum, walk along the hose, hop to the tree, run around the tree, jump over a stick, roll down the hill, walk in between the pennants and so on.

Purpose:
- Gross motor control
- Body image
- Spatial relationships

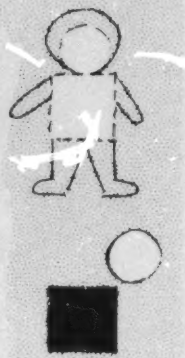
PASTING

Pasting activities will help the children develop many skills: eye hand coordination, sorting and classifying ability, how to follow a pattern, and to remember a motor sequence (cut out paper, turn it over, put paste on it, turn it over again, and press it down.)

A child must be able to place an object on an outline before he can paste accurately. Draw a series of shapes on a paper



and give the child an envelope containing a variety of cardboard pieces. Ask the child to choose the pieces needed to cover the series of drawn shapes.



When the child can do that, show him how to paste the shapes in place.

Sticker books in which the child punches out a picture and places it on an outlined picture may be recommended to the parents for a home activity.

Purpose:
- Visual motor coordination
- Visual Discrimination

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER

CUTTING

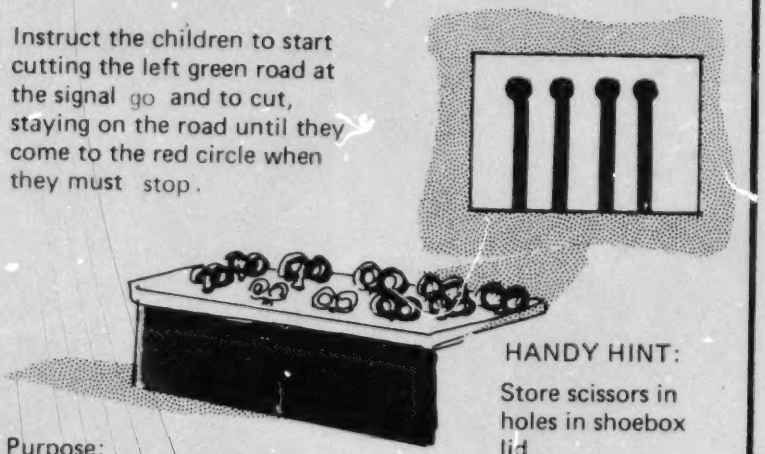
Cutting requires the ability to coordinate the eyes and the hand. To develop cutting skill, children may progress through the following sequence.

1. Wide straight line
2. Fringe (place mats, Indian dress or feathers)
3. Four straight lines to make a square.
4. A diagonal line to make two triangles from a square.
5. Wide line magic marker circle.
6. Fine line circle.
7. Irregular shapes.

Materials: Scissors and paper.

Draw 4 lines on paper using a ¼" green magic marker pen and put red circle at the top of each green line. Prepare a paper for each child.

Instruct the children to start cutting the left green road at the signal go and to cut, staying on the road until they come to the red circle when they must stop.



HANDY HINT:

Store scissors in holes in shoebox lid.

Purpose:
- Fine motor control
- Following directions
- Traffic safety colors
- Visual motor coordination

TRAFFIC SAFETY

Learning to stop and go on a signal requires self control. Musical chairs, walking on lines, and jumping on cue will help develop this control.

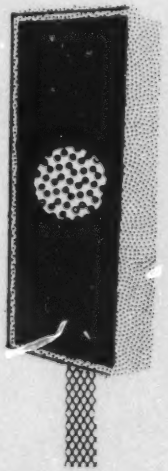
Traffic Light. Have the children make traffic signals by pasting circles on black paper.

Marching Game. Play a marching game to reinforce traffic safety colors. The teacher holds up the appropriate circle and says:

"Red light, red light
What do you say?
I say, "Stop!"
And stop right away.

"Yellow light, yellow light
What do you say?"
I say, "Wait!"
Till the light turns green.

"Green light, green light
What do you say?"
I say, "Go"
But first look both ways.



A finger play. Crossing Streets

Stop, look, and listen before you cross the street.
Use your eyes, (point to eyes)
Use your ears, (point to ears)
And then use your feet (point to feet)

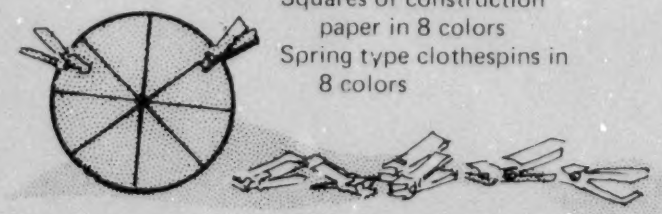
Record. Hap Arnold's record, "Health and Safety,"

Purpose:
- Safety
- Gross motor control
- Impulse control

COLORS

There is a hierarchy of learning involved in color work. First the child must associate the sense perception with the names of the colors. "This is red. That is blue." After sufficient exposure to colors and their names, the teacher may ask, "Which is red?" "Which is blue?" When the next step of learning is mastered, the teacher can ask, "What color is this?" and the child can respond, "It is red."

Matching. Materials: Color wheel of 8 basic colors
Squares of construction paper in 8 colors
Spring type clothespins in 8 colors



Review the names of the colors on the color wheel. Give each child a color card and a turn to match his card to the same color on the wheel and ask him to find something in the room that is the same color. Another day, ask him to snap a matching colored clothespin on each section of the color wheel.

Sorting. Materials: 8 shoe boxes
Various colored small items (blocks, cars, beads, pegs, markers)

Paint the inside of the shoe boxes in the primary colors and let the child sort the small items into the matching box.

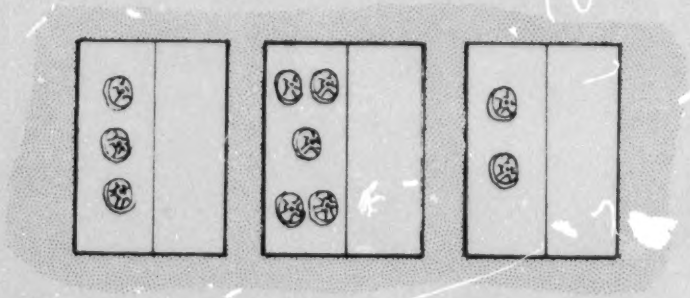
Color Memory. Hold up a colored toy and ask 3 or 4 children to find something in the room that is the same color. Put the toy out of sight so that the children must keep the color in mind while looking for a matching colored object.

60009

ONE TO ONE

Teaching a child to count by rote does not help him master number concepts. The child must begin by establishing one to one correspondence, and the concepts of more, less just the same, not enough and too much.

Materials: Box of wagon wheel macaroni
Set of number cards with from 1 – 5 wagon wheels glued on.



Give the child one card at a time. Ask him to place just as many wagon wheels on the blank half of the paper as there are on the other side. Say to the child, "Just enough, not too much." If the child has difficulty ask him to place the wagon wheels on top of the others. When he has done that successfully, remove the wheels and go back to the first question. If he cannot do it, stop. Put the cards and the materials away and let him play.

Try the game again in a week or two. Don't push. Don't use number words. The child can only learn through his own actions.

Adapted from Walton, Logical-Mathematical Thinking and the Pre-School Classroom

Purpose:
Number concepts

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER

SELF CONCEPT

The child's feelings of self worth are enhanced as he develops an awareness of his own identity and discovers that he is a very special person.

Outlines. Trace around the child's body with magic marker on a large sheet of paper. Let the child fill in his own features and clothing details. Help him to cut it out and display it proudly in the room.

Variation. Have the children one by one lie on the cement or hardtop playground. Trace around their bodies with chalk. When all the body outlines are completed, have the children point to the body parts on the outline as they are named.

Action Verse.

On my face I have a nose,
And on my feet I have ten toes.
I have two eyes that I can blink,
I have a head so I can think.
Here's my chin and very near,
I have two ears to help me hear.
I have a mouth with which I eat.
And when I run I use my feet.
I have two arms to hold up high,
And with my hand I wave good-bye.

Records. Two outstanding records to help the children understand themselves and their feelings are "Ideas, Thoughts and Feelings" and "Getting to Know Myself," both by Hap Palmer, Educational Activities.

SELF CONCEPT

Action Song.

If you're happy and you know it
touch your cheek
If you're happy and you know it
touch your nose, elbow, knee, etc.

To the tune of "Beer Barrel Polka." Ask the children to touch each body part as they sing.

Heads and shoulders.
Knees and toes.
Knees and toes.
Heads and shoulders.
Knees and toes.
Knees and toes.

The next time, use eyes and ears, and then mouth and nose.

Purpose:
Body Image

Books. There are many excellent books available that depict minority children as central characters.

Blacks – The Naughty Boy by Ezra Jack Keats
Sam by Ann Herbert Scott

Oriental–Ping by Marjorie Flack

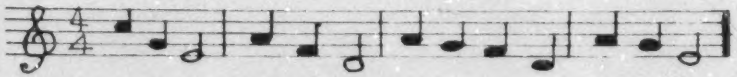
Indian – Indian Two Feet and His Eagle Feather by Margaret Friskey
Little Runner of the Longhouse by Betty Baker

Spanish American – Pepito's Story by Eugene Fern
The Painted Pig: A Mexican Picture Book by Elizabeth Morrow

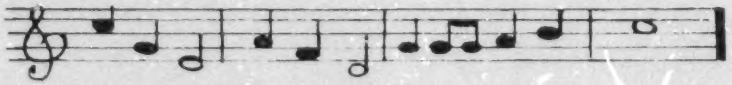
66010

New Shoes.

Here's a song to sing to make a special occasion out of the day the child wears new shoes to school.

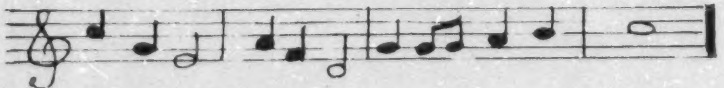


Brand new shoes, Brand new shoes,
(name) has some brand new shoes



Brand new shoes, Brand new shoes Show us what they can do

(Child shows that his new shoes can run, hop, skip, jump, walk, etc.)



They can ____ They can ____
(name) new shoes can ____

(jump or whatever child choses to do)

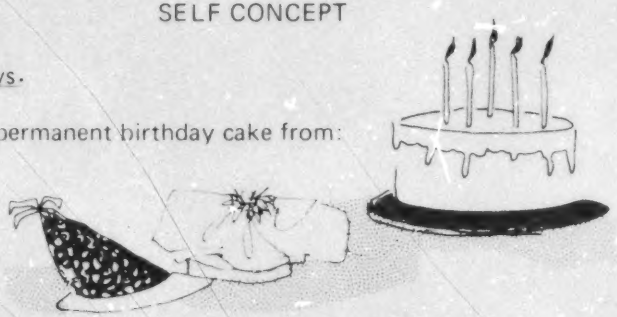
Story Time.

Read Let's Be Enemies by Janice May Udry. This charming, simple story will reinforce the social attributes of sharing, being polite and considerate of others that you want to foster in your children.

Another day read My Friend John by Charlotte Zolotow.

Birthdays.

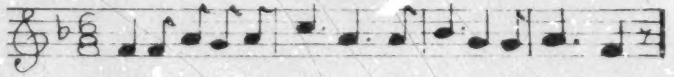
Make a permanent birthday cake from:



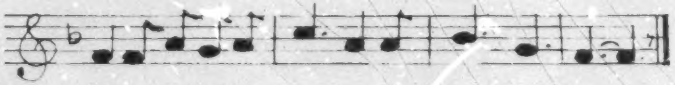
3–1" thick rounds of white styrofoam (9" diameter.)

Decorate the outside edge with a scalloped pink strip of felt held in place with pins. Glue birthday cake frosting decorations to the top of the cake. Insert as many candleholders and candles as the child is old. Have a birthday hat or crown for the child to wear.

Sing:



____'s having a birthday, a birthday, a birthday



____'s having a birthday, she's ___ years old!

Music © used with permission Follett Pub. Co.

Light the candles on the cake. Sing "Happy Birthday to You" and let the child blow out the candles. The birthday child may then tell the children whatever he wants about his day; how he will celebrate at home, etc. Then give him the choice of selecting his favorite story to be read to the class.

The record "Hooray! Today Is Your Birthday" by Tom Glazer, Young People's Records will add a festive touch to the day.

00011

SEPTEMBER

SHAPES

Children must establish an awareness of shapes before they can be expected to match, sort, identify, and reproduce them.

Tape a large circle on the floor and have the children march around, sit, and crawl on the circle.

Have small groups of children form smaller circles.

Have them find everything in the room that is round.

Take a "circle" walk outdoors.

Introduce the other geometric forms in a similar way.

Matching. Materials: Two sets of 4" squares, circles, triangles and rectangles cut from carpet samples or linoleum in varying colors and patterns.

Give each child one of a pair of patterned shapes. Have the children march in a circle to music. When the music stops, they must find their matching mate.

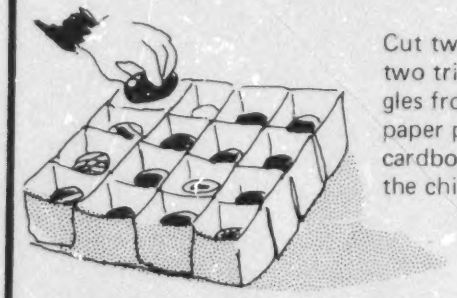
Give one child both sets of shapes mixed together. Have him find the ones that are alike.

Purpose:
Visual discrimination
Tactile discrimination

SHAPES

Sorting. Materials: 16 ½-pint milk cartons
16 different pages from a Sanitas wallpaper book

Remove the tops from the milk cartons and staple the cartons together in rows of four. If three staples are used at top and bottom where cartons meet, this will make a long lasting sorting tray.

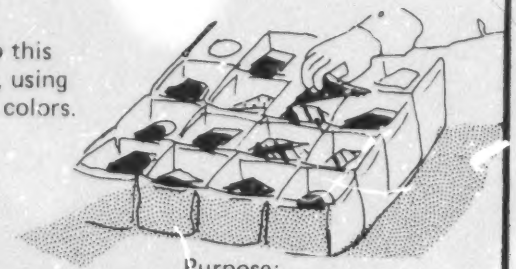


Cut two circles, two squares, two triangles and two rectangles from each of the 16 wallpaper pages. Back one set with cardboard for easier handling by the children.

Put an unmounted circle in each compartment of the sorting tray. Give the child the mounted set and have him match them, starting at the top left hand corner, working from left to right by dropping the shape in its corresponding box.

Follow a similar procedure with the squares, triangles, and rectangles.

When the child can do this easily, mix the shapes, using identical patterns and colors.



Individual activity
Adapted from Cangemi
Fifty Tactile and Visual Perception Games

Purpose:
Visual discrimination
Left – right progression

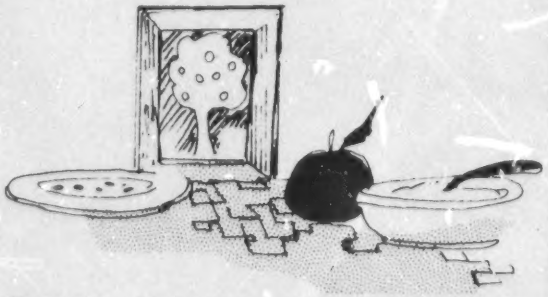
00012

APPLESAUCE

Take a field trip to an apple orchard. Let the children search for tall, small, thick, thin, and crooked trees, green, yellow, and red apples.

Finger play. This action game will help the children relive the experience.

Way up high in the apple tree,
(hands up in the air)
Two little apples smiled down at me.
(hands encircle eyes for eyeglasses)
I shook the tree as hard as I could.
(shake the tree)
Down came the apples.
(motion to the ground)
Ummmmm! They were good!
(pat tummy)

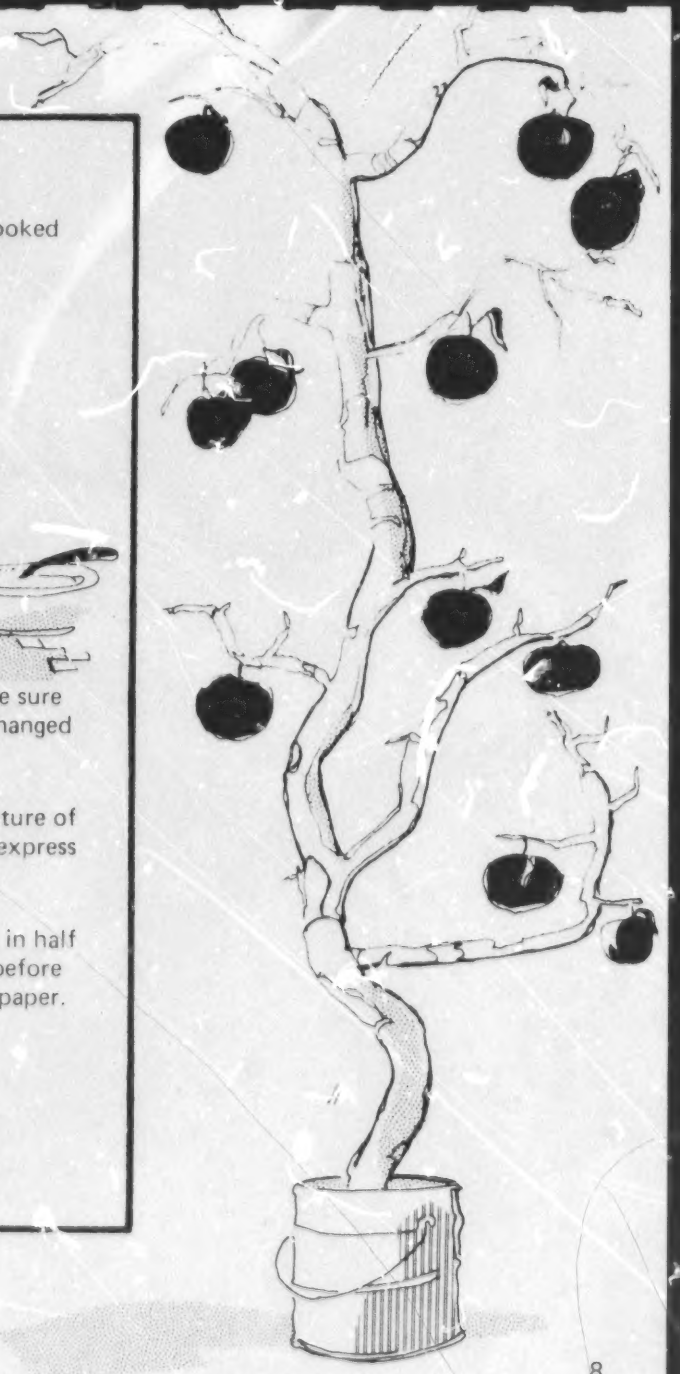


Cooking. Let the children see applesauce being made. They can add the sugar and spices. Be sure the children taste an apple slice and the applesauce to compare how cooking has changed the apple.

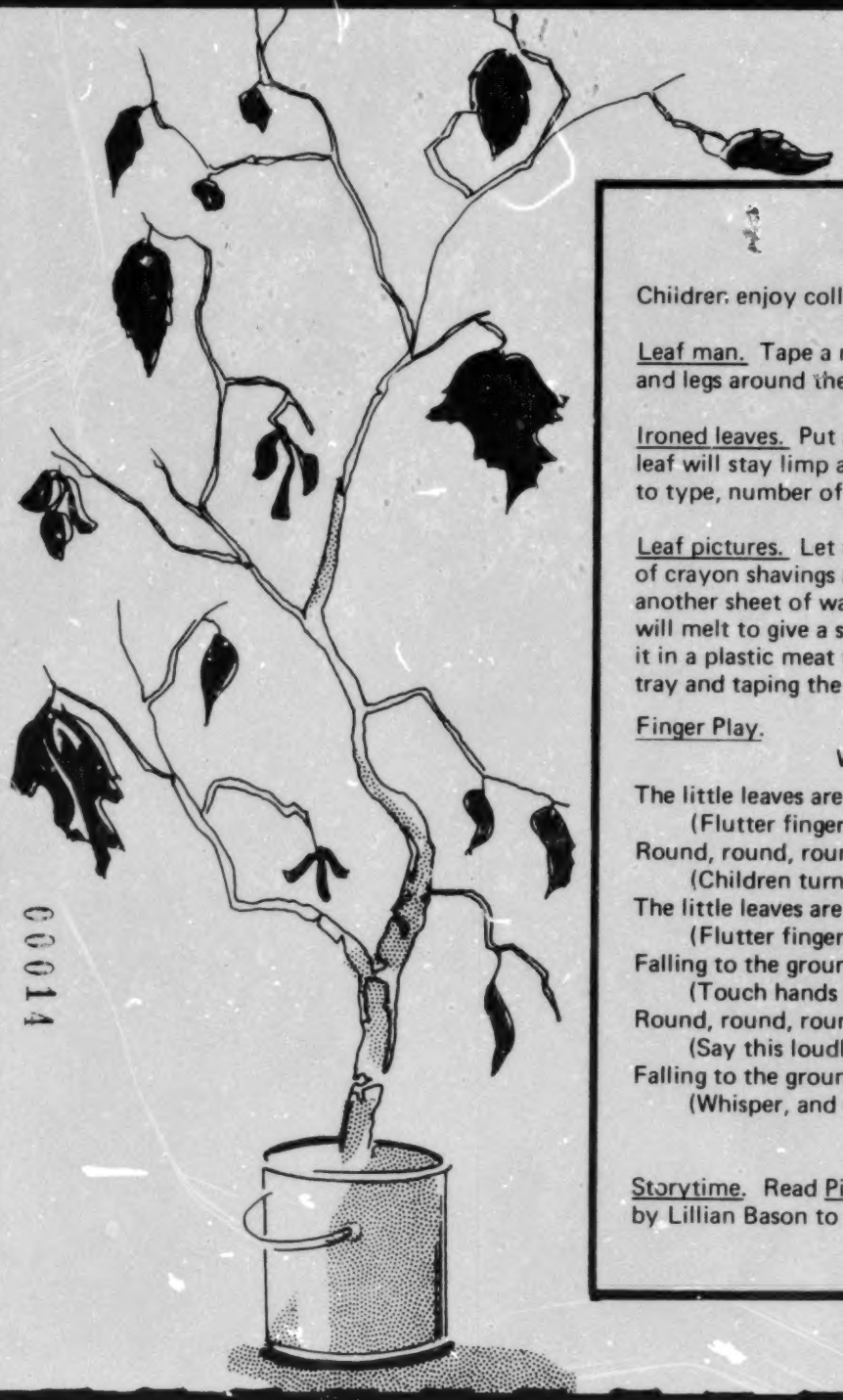
Which came first? The following day, put on the table an apple, a dish of apple seeds, a picture of an apple tree, and a dish of applesauce. Ask, "Which came first?" Give each child a chance to express an opinion and explain why he thinks that way.

Apple Art The children will enjoy an art project making apple prints from small apples cut in half crosswise. Be sure to wipe off the excess juice and let the apple halves stand for an hour or so before using them. The children may then press the apples in red, yellow, or green paint and print on paper.

Purpose:
- Problem solving
- Concept development
- Gross motor control
- Creative art expression



SEPTEMBER



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OCTOBER

LEAVES

Children enjoy collecting leaves in the fall and thrill to discover how different they can be.

Leaf man. Tape a real leaf to a piece of construction paper and let the children draw the head, arms, and legs around the leaf body.

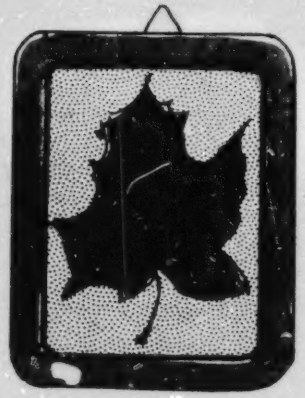
Ironed leaves. Put a fresh leaf between two pieces of waxed paper and press with a warm iron. The leaf will stay limp and will not crumble. The collected leaves can then be sorted into piles according to type, number of points, size or color.

Leaf pictures. Let the child arrange three or four leaves on a sheet of waxed paper and sprinkle bits of crayon shavings around the leaves. (A pencil sharpener may be used to get the shavings.) Cover with another sheet of waxed paper. Let the child watch as the teacher irons the waxed paper. The crayon will melt to give a stained glass, transparent effect. The child may frame his leaf picture by pasting it in a plastic meat tray or make a framed window mobile by cutting the center from the plastic meat tray and taping the see-through picture to the frame.

Finger Play.

Whirling Leaves

The little leaves are whirling,
(Flutter fingers above head and down to floor)
Round, round, round.
(Children turn around)
The little leaves are whirling round,
(Flutter fingers)
Falling to the ground,
(Touch hands to the floor)
Round, round, round, round,
(Say this loudly, then softer and softer)
Falling to the ground.
(Whisper, and children sink quietly to the floor)



Storytime. Read Pick a Raincoat, Pick a Whistle by Lillian Bason to the children.

MATCHING

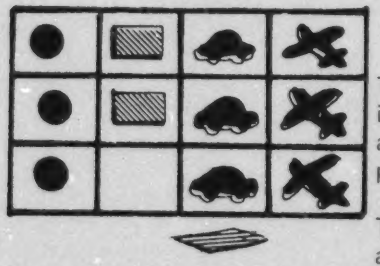
Any activity that encourages matching on the basis of a specific characteristic such as shape, color, or size will help develop a child's discrimination ability and enable him to cope with higher level abstraction and classification.

Materials: 4 sets of 3 identical objects varying only in color

Arrange all but one item on the card so that the horizontal rows are made up of objects of the same color and the vertical rows are made up of the same kind of items. Give the child the missing object and an opportunity to place it where it belongs.

Rearrange the items in a different order, each time leaving out one item for the child to replace.

Then leave out two items. As the child develops more skill in seeing the pattern, gradually omit more items until the child can place 9 items correctly when given a starter pattern of 3.

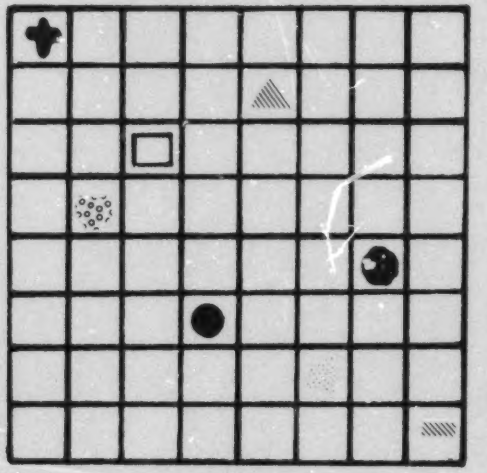


The difficulty level may be increased by adding new items and colors and enlarging the pattern card.

This game may also be used for a small or large group activity, by asking the most able youngsters to place objects when there are many spaces and the less certain children to fill in when the choices are reduced.

When the children are skilled in matching three-dimensional objects, try it with cut-out shapes instead of real objects.

MATCHING



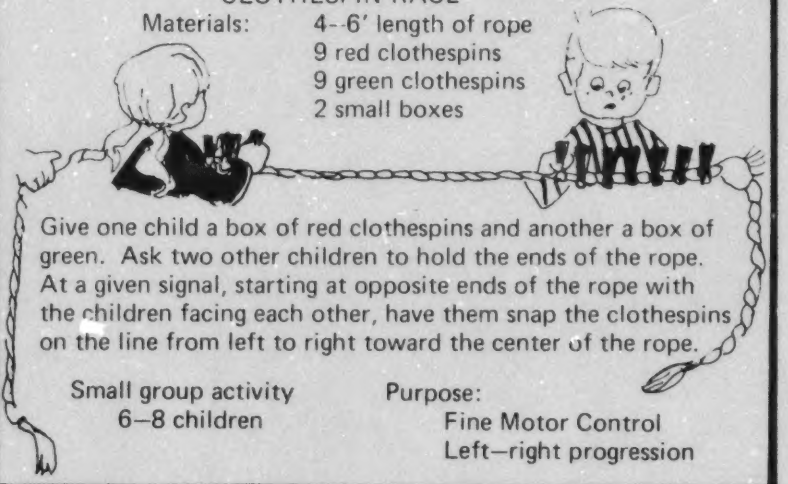
Red
Blue
Yellow
Brown
Green
Black
Orange
Purple

Adapted from Walton, Logical Mathematical Thinking and the Pre-School Classroom

Purpose:
Visual discrimination
Number concepts

CLOTHESPIN RACE

Materials: 4--6' length of rope
9 red clothespins
9 green clothespins
2 small boxes



Give one child a box of red clothespins and another a box of green. Ask two other children to hold the ends of the rope. At a given signal, starting at opposite ends of the rope with the children facing each other, have them snap the clothespins on the line from left to right toward the center of the rope.

Small group activity
6–8 children

Purpose:
Fine Motor Control
Left–right progression

OCTOBER

OCTOBER

GROUPING

Beads, toys, buttons, and other little objects that appeal to young children are useful when introducing grouping, a prerequisite to the development of number concepts. The easiest math concept, for children to acquire after one-to-one correspondence, is that of pairs. Through manipulation and visualization, the children will discover number set concepts on their own.

Pairs. Materials: One shoe from each child.

A simple game of mixing one shoe from each child into a pile in the center of the room can introduce pairs and the first elements of grouping. At a signal, have the children race to find their other shoe. For the first time, they may be aware that some shoes are black and some are brown, some brown shoes have laces, some have buckles, some have neither, and some are larger than others.

Stimulate the children's thinking in terms of pairs. "What comes in pairs?" Shoes, eyes, socks, earrings, nylons, ear muffs, mittens, ice skates, etc. Then ask, "How many make a pair?"

Purpose: Number concepts
Matching

ROPE TRICKS

A jump rope is not just for jumping. It can be used for a variety of physical and mental activities that are especially valuable for children with motor problems and children with mixed dominance.

Materials: 8' length of rope.

Straddling. Place the rope on the floor and have the children walk its length straddling the rope without stepping on it.

Tight rope walking. Have the children walk on the rope forward, backward and sideways. Ask them to try it with arms out at the sides, stretched overhead, and straight down.

Duck it. Have two children hold the rope at either end suspended above the floor. Then have the other youngsters crawl, roll or do the crab walk under the rope one by one. Start with the rope held high and lower it as the children become more proficient.

Crossing the river. Double the rope on the floor and have the class take turns "crossing the river."

After all have jumped across, widen the river gradually, until one by one the children all fall in and get their feet wet.

Purpose: Gross motor control
Body image

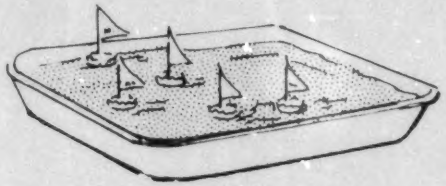
00016

COLUMBUS DAY

After the children have heard the story of Columbus discovering America, a boat race would be fun.

Materials: Bottle caps and florist clay or tiny bars of Ivory soap
Roasting pan
Straws and toothpicks

Print the child's name on a tiny construction paper sail. Have the child roll a little ball of floral clay and press it into the bottle cap. Stick the toothpick through the sail and into the clay. Soap may be used in place of caps and clay. It's a great day for sailing. Race five boats at a time by having the children blow the sails of their boat through the straws.



Poem

Columbus sailed from far off Spain.
A long, long time ago.
He had three ships that only moved
When winds would pull and blow.
We're mighty glad he was so brave
And every year we tell
Of how he found America,
The land we love so well.

Author Unknown

Art

Make jumbo yarn drawings of ships by having the children glue thick yarn to an outline drawn on the paper.

Purpose: Historical
Science Concepts
Breath Control

AUDITORY PERCEPTION

Shh! What is it?

Auditory skills are important for learning to speak and to use language appropriately. It may seem to be an easy task to listen and identify a sound but success is dependent on a complex cluster of auditory perceptual skills and normal hearing acuity.

Materials: Bell, toy horn, whistle, alarm clock, pencil sharpener, ball, balloon, paper, water and pitcher, etc.

Show the children four objects and ask them to listen carefully as you sound one of the objects out of sight (behind a desk or box). Ask the children to identify what made the sound. To increase the difficulty, add more sounds or tape record environmental sounds such as the telephone, doorbell, vacuum cleaner.

Records. The records "Muffin in the Country" and "Muffin in the City" will delight the children as they try to identify farm and city noises.

Poem.

Sounds

The tinkling of bells,
The crunching of toast,
The rustle of leaves,
Are the sounds I like most.

The crashing of thunder,
The buzz of a bee,
The squealing of tires,
Are not sounds for me.

Pauline C. Peck

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Purpose: Auditory discrimination
Listening
Language development

00017

OCTOBER

HALLOWEEN FUN

Some young children are frightened by Halloween masks. Use dress up clothes and decorations on hats instead of masks.

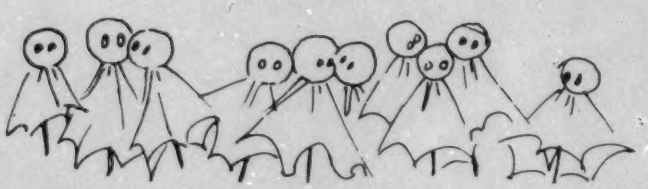
Scarecrows.

Make a scarecrow for your classroom. Have the children bring in some of Dad's old clothes. They can stuff a brown bag with newspapers for a head, put a broom in each pant leg, pad out the shirt and prop up in a corner. Tell the children that scarecrows are used to keep birds from eating gardens.

Then use this action poem.

Scarecrow, Scarecrow, turn around
Scarecrow, Scarecrow, jump up and down.
Scarecrow, Scarecrow, arms up high.
Scarecrow, Scarecrow, wink one eye.
Scarecrow, Scarecrow, bend your knees.
Scarecrow, Scarecrow, flap in the breeze.
Scarecrow, Scarecrow, climb into bed.
Scarecrow, Scarecrow, rest your head.

Ghost favors.



Let the children make kleenex ghosts by wrapping tissues over a lollipop. Tie with white string around the neck and add two eyes on the face with a black felt tip pen.

00018

HALLOWEEN FUN

Finger plays are multi-purpose. They help the children establish better listening habits, teach them to follow directions, hear rhyming words, provide opportunity for imitation of movement practice, help build concepts of size, shape, place and help develop fine motor skills.

Pumpkins.

The children raise a finger at each number word and at the end of the finger play make a fist with thumbs tucked inside.

Five little pumpkins
Sitting on a gate.
The first one said
"Oh, my, it's getting late."
The second one said
"There are witches in the air."
The third one said,
"But we don't care."
The fourth one said,
"Let's run and run and run."
The fifth one said,
"I'm ready for some fun."
"Oooooh," went the wind
And out went the light,
And five little pumpkins
Rolled out of sight.

Make pumpkin men using accordion pleated strips of paper for arms and legs.

Play the game Pin the Nose on the Pumpkin.

A Surprise Story.

Once upon a time –

there was a little boy who liked pumpkins so much, he even looked like one.

He had bright orange skin that was shiny and smooth. Everybody called him Peter Pumpkin.

Peter liked everything about pumpkins.

He liked to eat them for a vegetable and oh! did he love pumpkin pie!

He even liked the pumpkin seeds and sometimes he made funny pictures with them.

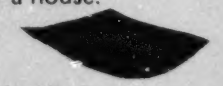
Peter's best friend was Kitty, the cat.

She was black and silky, and she had a soft contented purr-r-r-r-r.

She and Peter went everywhere together. They played all summer and fall, and slept out in the Pumpkin field at night, but when the days grew cold, br-r-r-r-r.

And Halloween was near, Peter wanted a snug house of his own and so did Kitty.

One crisp morning they set out together to look for a house.

In front of a school, they found a large piece of orange paper.  "My favorite color," said Peter.

"It's just what we need," said Kitty.

They tugged and tugged and pushed and pushed and pulled

until the paper looked like this. (fold paper in half.)

With a pair of scissors just like this (hold up the scissors), Peter carefully and slowly

rounded off the corners just like this.

"Meow," said Kitty, "that looks nice but it doesn't look like a house."

Then Peter remembered that he would need a door. He cut a tall one like this.

Peter was pleased. "I think I'll add a window, too," he said.

And he did, like this. But Kitty was curious to know where she would come in.

Peter laughed and quickly

Added another door –– a teeny, tiny one just the right size for Kitty.

On Halloween night, Kitty and Peter invited all their friends to a party.

And when they opened their new house for their friends,

Everyone was surprised and delighted

For this is what they saw:

A

NICE

ROUND

JACK–O–LANTERN!

00019

OCTOBER

HALLOWEEN FUN

Witches.

This action poem will help develop concepts and language.

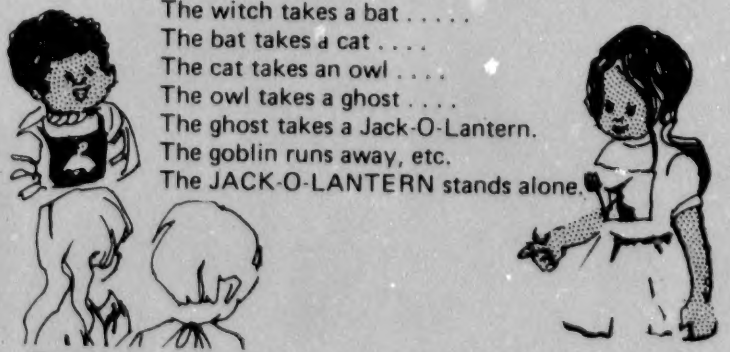
One dark autumn night
I saw quite a sight.
I looked at the sky
And a witch flew by!
In a tall black hat
On a broomstick she sat.
She went very slow
As she came down low.
Then up in the sky
She went sailing high.
To the left, then the right
With all of her might.
She circled the town
Around and around.
But the strangest part,
I will cross my heart,
Though I look every night,
When the moon shines bright,
She is only seen
When it's HALLOWEEN!

Marty Beach

Circle game.

Play this game to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell."

The goblins in the dark, the goblins in the dark,
Hi-ho on Halloween, the goblins in the dark.
The goblin takes a witch . . . .
The witch takes a bat . . . . .
The bat takes a cat . . . .
The cat takes an owl . . . .
The owl takes a ghost . . . .
The ghost takes a Jack-O-Lantern.
The goblin runs away, etc.
The JACK-O-LANTERN stands alone.

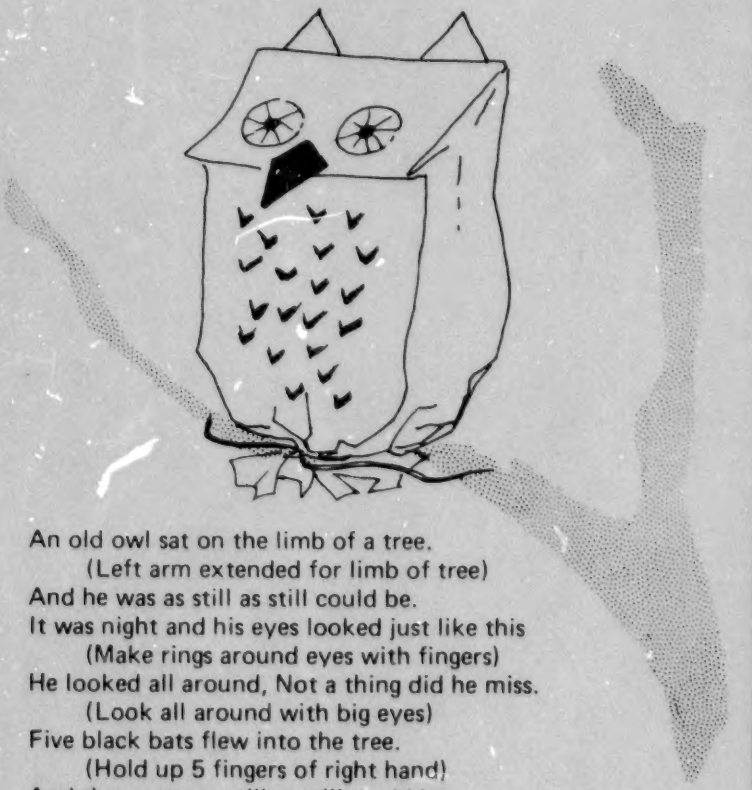


To test the children's knowledge of Halloween vocabulary, a variation of this game may be played by having each child wear a picture of one of the characters. The child in the center must choose from among the children wearing the right picture.

HALLOWEEN FUN

Owls.

To make a paper bag owl, flatten a small bag to retain all its original folds. Add two round yellow eyes, two pointed ears and a beak. Draw v's on the body and stuff with newspapers. Tie at the bottom with a string.



An old owl sat on the limb of a tree.
(Left arm extended for limb of tree)
And he was as still as still could be.
It was night and his eyes looked just like this
(Make rings around eyes with fingers)
He looked all around, Not a thing did he miss.
(Look all around with big eyes)
Five black bats flew into the tree.
(Hold up 5 fingers of right hand)
And they were as still as still could be.
(Put index finger of left hand to mouth)
The old owl looked around and said, "Whooo, whooo!"
And away went the bats, away they flew.
(Hide right hand)

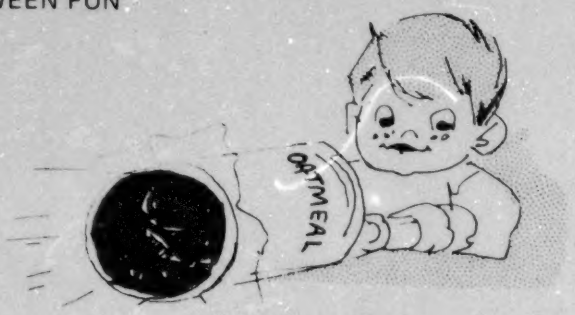
00020

00021

HALLOWEEN FUN

Flying Witch.

Materials: Oatmeal box
Flashlight
Saran Wrap
Witch silhouette



Remove both ends of an oatmeal box. Cover one end with plastic wrap held in place with a rubber band. Paste a black silhouette of a witch riding on a broomstick or a bat on the Saran Wrap end.

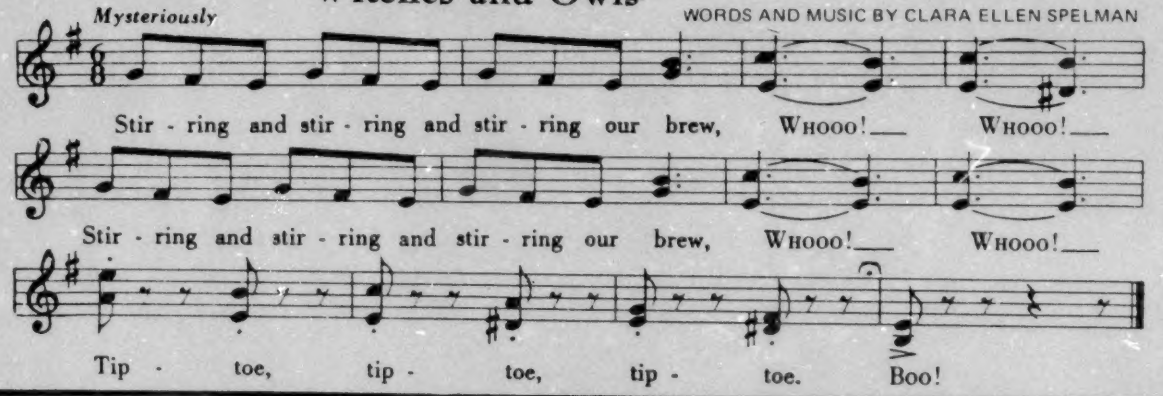
Darken the room. When the lighted flashlight is held inside the box, scary Halloween shadows will fly across your room.

Action Song.

Select five children to be witches stirring the stew, five others to be owls on creaking trees who sway their heads in spooky fashion. The other children will be "tiptoe" people — goblins, pumpkins and cats.

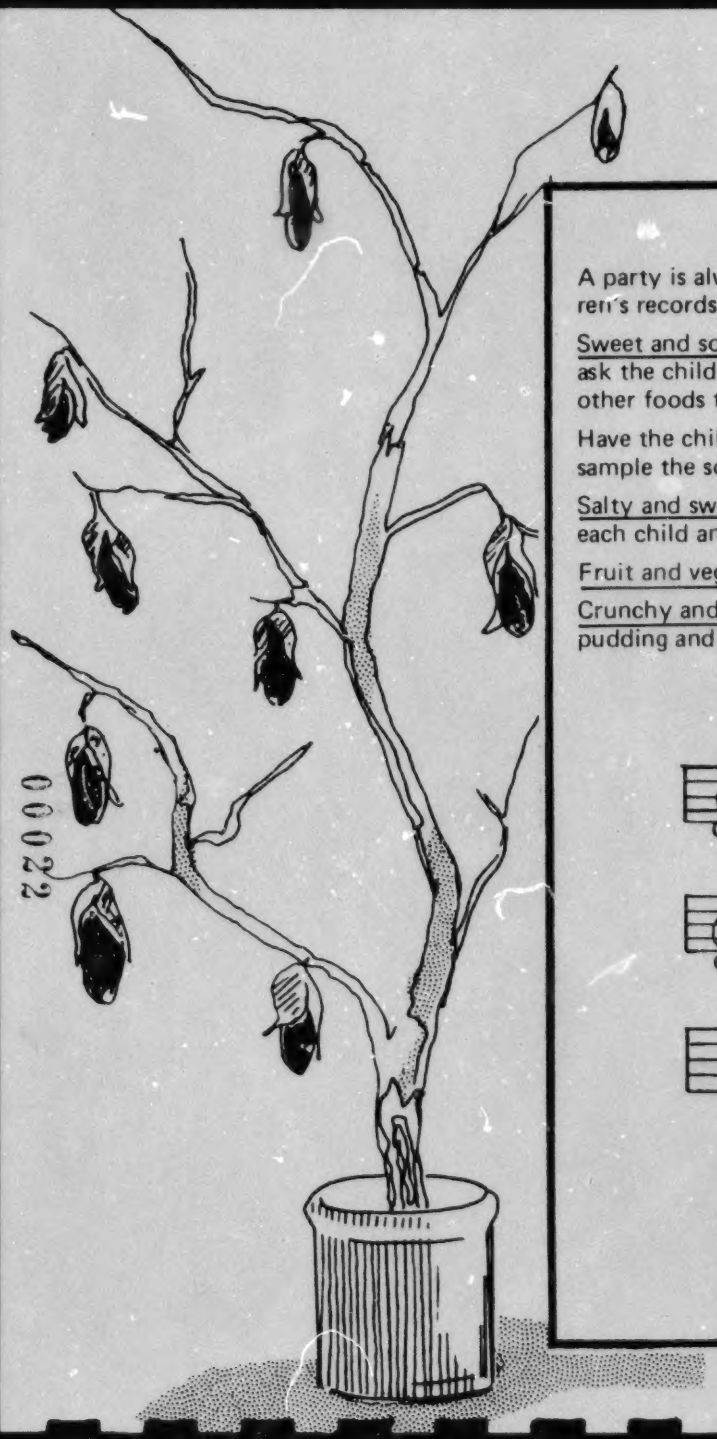
Witches and Owls

WORDS AND MUSIC BY CLARA ELLEN SPELMAN



FROM MUSIC FOR LIVING THROUGH THE DAY © 1962 SILVER BURDETT CO. REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF GENERAL LEARING CORPORATION

OCTOBER



NOVEMBER

TASTING PARTY

A party is always something special! Why not have a tasting party, at a regular event. Be sure to check the children's records for allergies.

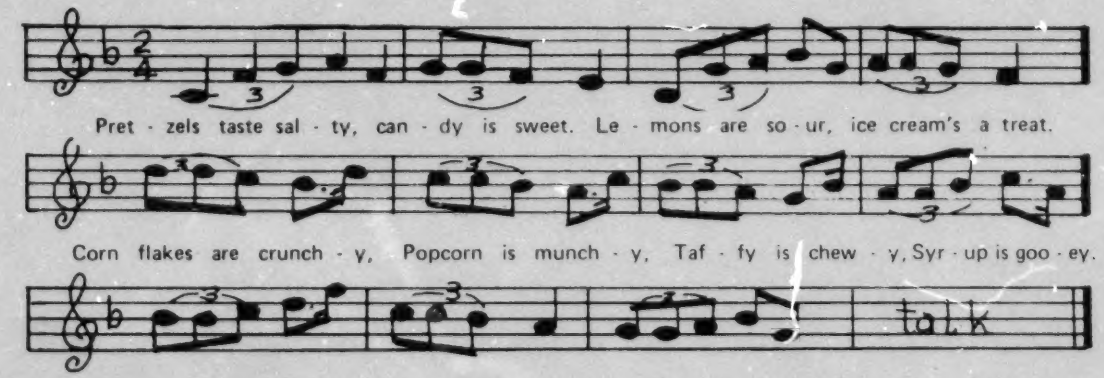
Sweet and sour. The first day, begin with a small piece of candy for each child. Explain that candy is sweet and ask the children to name other foods that are sweet. Give each child a think slice of lemon to taste. Ask what other foods taste sour.

Have the children watch as you squeeze a few lemons and pour the juice into a pitcher of water. Let each child sample the sour lemonade in his own paper cup. Add sugar and let the children taste it again.

Salty and sweet. Another day, compare foods that are salty and sweet. Have M & M's and a tiny marshmallow for each child and salty foods such as peanuts, salted crackers, and potato chips.

Fruit and vegetables. Compare samples of raw vegetables with samples of fresh fruit.

Crunchy and soft. Compare crunchy foods such as crackers and nuts and raw cauliflower with soft foods such as pudding and ice cream.



Purpose:

- Gustatory awareness
- Classification
- Language development

00029

MIRROR PLAY

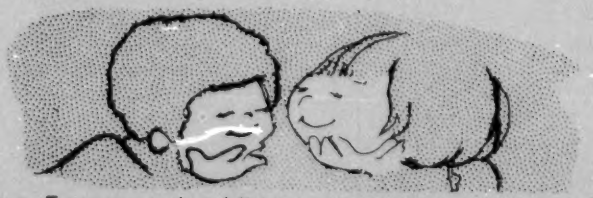
Children need to feel important and valued for themselves; in other words, they need to develop a positive self image. The preschool child often does not have a clear idea of what he looks like or how big he is in relation to others. There should be a mirror in every preschool classroom, even in the play house.

Material: 5' x 5' mirror at floor level

With a magic marker, trace around a child's image on the mirror. Let him fill in the facial features and clothing details. Point to a body part on the mirror and have him touch and name that part of his body. Make a mirror portrait of a different child each day until all have had a turn.

The children will enjoy cleaning the mirror each morning with Bon Ami. Teach them to use a counterclockwise motion, left to right and top to bottom. There's no better readiness activity for writing.

Game. Let each child choose a partner and have them face each other. One child becomes the "mirror." The other child performs various movements in time to music while the "mirror" child attempts to mimic him.



Emotions. Encourage the children to make funny faces in the mirror and imitate emotions such as sad, happy, surprised, angry, sleepy, tired, etc.

Dress-up. Role playing in dress-up clothes is even more fun when there is a mirror to look in. To develop socially and emotionally, children must find people with whom to identify. Role playing and pretending foster personal relationships.

Purpose: Self concept

MIRROR PLAY

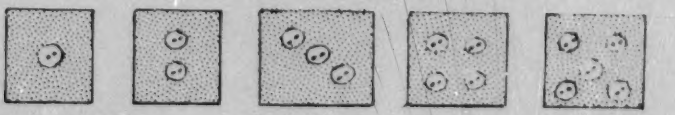
Action Song. To tune of "I'm a Little Teapot."

I'm a little face that's long but round.
Two eyes, a nose and a mouth can be found.
Here are two ears and on top some hair.
I look in the mirror and see me there.

NUMBER SETS

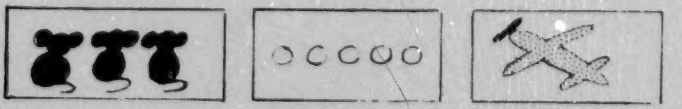
Children can be taught to count, but an understanding of numbers is something they must develop for themselves from their own experience. Let the children set the table; one napkin for each chair, one spoon for each napkin, etc.

Materials: A set of 1 through 5 button cards
Box of small duplicated objects
A set of 1 through 5 picture cards



Sew buttons firmly on to cardboard cards. Have the child select the number of objects that will be just the same as the number of buttons on the cards.

When the child can do that easily, give him a set of picture cards showing groups of people, animals, or objects to match to the button cards.



Finger plays. The children enjoy "Johnny Pounds with One Hammer," and "One, Two Button My Shoe."

Purpose: Number concepts

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER

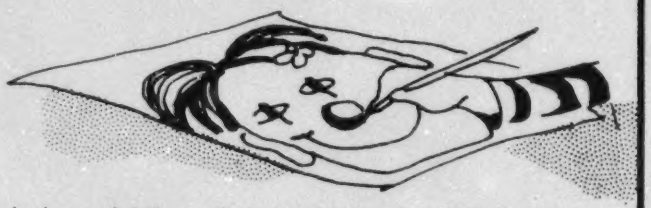
CREATIVE ART

A child's imagination will lead him into new perceptual awareness and innovative thinking as long as adult standards are not imposed on his work. The doing is so much more important than the finished product.

Crayons. Coloring with crayons requires that the child be able to pick up and hold a crayon, control where it goes, and not simply make marks on a paper.

Children love to color with crayons. Let them also experiment rubbing crayons on thin paper placed over corrugated paper, bricks, rough cement, etc.; the patterns of the various textures will delight them.

Easel painting. Use gray bogus paper for easel painting. It's rough and poorly finished, but that makes it less expensive and the paint sticks to it better than to smooth paper. Give the children thick brushes and a free choice of colors.



Finger painting. Adding a little liquid starch to the tempera will thicken it and also brighten the colors. Use smooth, slippery paper.

Occasionally, add sawdust, sand, coffee grounds, cinnamon, or other fine ingredients to the finger paint to let the children experience different textures and smells.

Add soap flakes to a small amount of water and beat until it forms a creamy finger paint to which color may be added.

Shaving cream squirted from an aerosol can has a clean smell.

00024

CREATIVE ART

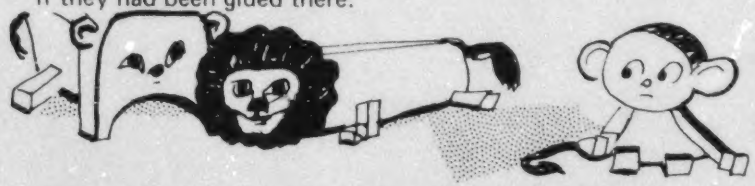
Dot painting. Put several colors of tempera in plastic squeeze bottles. Have the children dot paint on one half of a sheet of paper, then fold the paper in half and there will be a surprise symmetrical design.

Straw painting. Have the children put dots of paint on the paper and blow the dots around with a straw to make interesting designs. This also helps develop breath control.

Sponge painting. Cut sponges into small pieces and attach a spring-type clothespin for a handle; it's less messy and easier for the children to handle as they daub the paint on the paper.

Salt painting. Color salt with a little dry tempera and put it in salt and pepper shakers. Have the children spread glue thinly on a piece of paper, then shake the salt-paint mixture onto the paper to form a picture.

Spaghetti pictures. Cook spaghetti in class and let it cool. Do not rinse. While it is still wet, give each child a piece of bright construction paper and a little dish of a few strands of spaghetti. The child can arrange the strands to his liking in any shape or squiggle. As they dry, the strands will stick as if they had been glued there.



Wood sculpture. Bring a pile of lumber yard scraps to the classroom. Let the children glue the wood together to make anything they want.

CREATIVE ART

Clay. Twisting, thumping clay and rolling it into worms provides a constructive way for the children to release emotional tension and develop fine motor abilities at the same time.

Commercial clay, play dough, and cornstarch clay (1 cup of cornstarch to 2 cups of salt and 1 1/3 cups of cold water, kneaded together) all serve the purpose.

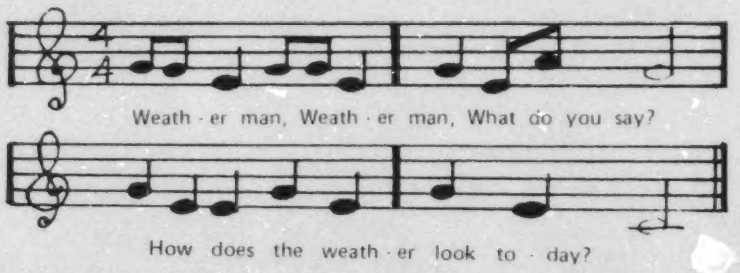
Bread sculpture. Use a small amount of water and 1 tablespoon of glue for each slice of bread to be used. Have the children break the bread into small pieces and knead with the water and glue until it is smooth and elastic. The dough can then be used to create shapes, flowers, or other figures just like clay. When dry, the bread sculpture will have a shiny glaze. It may also be painted if desired.

Collages. Make available to the children scraps of paper, salt, sand, glitter, leaves, dry cereals, feathers, beans, rice, crushed egg shells, yarn, and all the leftover bits from other projects and let them create what they will.

Purpose: Creative art
Tactile awareness
Olfactory awareness
Fine motor control
Emotional release

WEATHER

Song.



Poem.

Air is cool, air is warm.
Air is busy in a storm.
Air is moving (that's the wind).
Air is still, as though it's pinned.
Air is heavy, thick and gray,
especially on a foggy day.
I don't know all about the air
But I know this —— it's always there.

Game. One child plays the Sun. He stands in the center of a circle of children who are snowflakes. As they walk around him, he reaches out and touches them one by one, causing them to melt and sink to the floor.

Purpose: Imagery
Impulse control

Story Time. Read Seasons by John Birmingham. The children will enjoy the illustrations and develop concepts of weather and changing seasons.

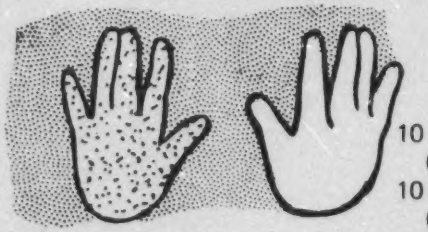
00025

NOVEMBER

DISHPAN HANDS

Discrimination learning should progress from easy to hard tasks. This activity starts out easy and gets more difficult preparing the children for the challenging tasks they will meet in school.

Rough and smooth. Materials:



10 green plastic hand cutouts
(5 right, 5 left)
10 sandpaper hand cutouts
(5 right, 5 left)

The child is asked to sort the hands into two piles of smooth and rough hands.

The child sorts the hands into two piles of right and left hands and then matches his hands to the correct pile.

The child is then asked to sort the hands into four piles of smooth left hands, smooth right hands, rough left hands, and rough right hands.

Arrange the four piles in random order and at odd angles and have the child put his hands on a pair (right on right and left on left).

Individual activity

Purpose: Tactile awareness
Left-right discrimination

Child's handprints. Trace around each child's right and left hand on construction paper. Write the child's name on each hand. Cut out the handprints and tape to the wall in pairs.

DISHPAN HANDS

Have the children take turns finding their own hands testing for size by placing their hands on their handprints.

Another day, rearrange the handprints so that the right and left hands are not side by side. Have the children try the hands for size by placing their corresponding hands on the cutouts.

When the children can successfully do that, rearrange the hands so that the children must cross their arms to place their corresponding hands on their handprints. This may be difficult for many children.

Finger play.

Open, shut them, open, shut them.
Give your hands a clap.
Open, shut them, open, shut them.
Put them in your lap.
Creep them, crawl them,
Creep them, crawl them.
Right up to your chin.
Open wide your little mouth
But do not put them in.
Open, shut them, open, shut them.
Give your hands a clap.
Open, shut them, open, shut them.
Put them in your lap.

Take advantage of the situation and tell a story while you have the children's attention and they are sitting quietly with their hands in their lap.

Purpose: Body image
Left-right discrimination

92006

BALANCE BEAM

Before beginning the children on a balance beam, have them practice walking a straight line, placing one foot straight in front of the other, heel to toe. Name the foot they are using to encourage the awareness of the left and right sides of their bodies.

Introduce the children to balance beam activities on a 12" wide board on the floor so that all the children have a successful experience. Raise the board 2" off the floor and gradually decrease the width of the board to 8" and then to 4", as the children's skill develops. Children needing help may hold onto a broomstick guided by the teacher.

Have the children:

- Walk forward on the balance beam, sideways and backwards.
- Walk with their arms outstretched, at their sides and over their heads.
- Look straight ahead at a target on the wall and walk forward.
- Walk with a beanbag balanced on their heads.
- Carry an object in one hand.
- Turn around and go in the opposite direction without getting off the beam.

Purpose: Balance
Following directions

PUZZLES

The ability to perceive visual likenesses and differences progresses from gross to minute details. Nothing is more frustrating to a child than to be given a puzzle to put together that is beyond his capabilities.

Drop-ins. Start with 3 one-pound coffee cans covered with contact paper. Cut a circle in the plastic lid of one can, a square in the next, and a triangle in the other. Cut cardboard shapes a little smaller than each opening. Ask the children to fit them into the proper holes. A Tupperware ball is excellent for this activity.

Form boards. Form boards are available commercially or can be homemade. Trace around shapes on corrugated paper. Cut out the shapes with an Exacto knife. Paste a piece of contrasting colored paper over the hole to form a backing. The shapes used as patterns or the cut-out shapes may be used as inserts. A jig saw may be used to make wooden puzzles. Drawer pulls screwed into the shapes make them easier for little hands to manipulate.

Homemade puzzles. Make your own 2–, 3–, and 4–piece puzzles for the children before turning them loose on the more complex commercial variety. Select large colorful pictures from old magazines. Mount on cardboard and cut.

The child is ready for commercial puzzles.

Individual activity

Purpose: Shape discrimination
Visual motor coordination

00027

NOVEMBER

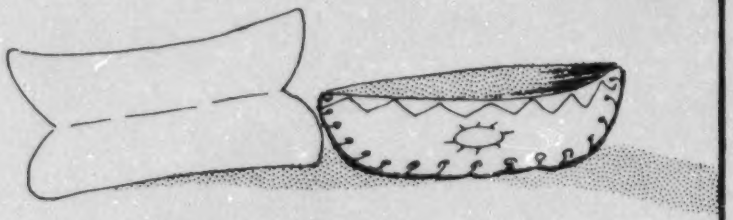
NOVEMBER

INDIANS

Children everywhere enjoy playing Indian.

Canoes. Materials: Brown construction paper
Yellow yarn

Cut a canoe from folded brown construction paper for each child. With the canoe still folded, punch evenly spaced holes along the fold line and the ends of the canoe.



Have the children decorate the canoes with crayon designs and lace the boat together with yellow yarn. Wrap a piece of scotch tape around the end of the yarn to stiffen it for easier lacing.

Necklaces. The children can string macaroni to make an Indian necklace, or, better yet, soak lima beans until they are soft. Let the children make a necklace or bracelet from them by sticking a large, blunt needle which has been threaded with string through each bean. When the beans dry, they look like teeth and will rattle nicely.

Tepees. Tepees are made from cone-shaped paper cups. Cut a wedge out to make a door and paint with tempera. Cut the tip off the top and insert three drinking straws.

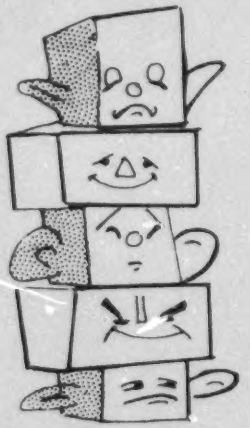
82002

INDIANS

Headdress. Cut a 4" wide strip of paper, 20" long, from brown wrapping paper or paper bags. Fold it in half lengthwise and have the children decorate one side. Staple the ends to fit their heads. Fringed construction paper feathers may then be slipped between the folded band and stapled into place.

Clothes. Have the girls paint designs on large brown paper bags. Cut a hole for the head and arms. Have the girls fringe the bottom.

Have the boys paint designs on large brown bags from which the bottom 5 inches have been removed. Cut a hole for the head and arms, and cut up the front to form a vest. Have the boys fringe the bottom and front edges of their vests.



INDIANS

Totem Poles. Collect a variety of colorful large boxes. Cut a hole in the bottom and top of each box. Then have the children make faces on the boxes by pasting on shapes. Slip each box over a broom handle. Add the finishing touches of cardboard ears and beaks and you will have a classroom totem pole.

Drums. Oatmeal boxes or coffee cans can be used to make drums. Beat on the drum and ask the children to copy the number of beats.

Purpose: Auditory memory

Dances. Dressed in their costumes, the children will have no problem getting into the spirit of Indian dancing and rhythms.

Record. "Little Indian Drum" by Young People's Records tells the story of a little Indian boy who learned to make his drum talk. It will help the children develop a rhythmic sense.

Purpose: Fun
Gross motor skills
Fine motor skills

ALL-TIME FAVORITE CIRCLE GAMES

As the child plays, he learns to follow the rules of the game and to wait for his turn.

Duck, Duck, Goose. One child passes around the circle behind the others, touching each child lightly on the head saying, "Duck, Duck, Duck," One time he will say "Goose," and that child must try to catch the first child as they run around the circle. If he succeeds the first child takes a seat in the circle and the goose walks around saying "Duck, Duck, Goose." No child should have more than two turns.

Choosing Game. One child walks around the circle to music. When the music stops, he chooses a partner. The two children walk around until the music stops again and then they both choose another partner. Continue until all children are walking.

Froggie, Froggie. One child hops like a frog inside the circle and stops facing a child and chants, "Froggie, froggie, who's your neighbor?" The other child responds, "I don't know, but I'll go see." That child hops to another child and asks the same question. After being Froggie, the child sits in the place of the child he chose. The game ends when all have had a turn and are seated.

Little Gray Horse. One child is selected to be the horse and stands inside a circle of children holding hands.

The little gray horse is locked in the barn
And wants to get out to play.
Just open the door (2 children open hands)
And let him out.
And he gallops and gallops away.
(Child in circle gallops out and around room.)
He gallops and gallops away.
The little gray horse is out of the barn
And he gallops and gallops away.
The little gray horse comes home to the barn
He's tired and wants to eat hay.
(The child joins the circle and another is chosen "Gray horse.")

00029

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER

SCARF PLAY

Waving scarves can float and dance with the children. They stimulate the imagination as well as provide shoulder, wrist and hand manipulation exercise. See that there are enough colorful filmy chiffon scarves for each child to have one.

Role playing. Play the record "My Playful Scarf" by Young People's Records.

Variations. Tie several strips of colorful crepe paper about 18" long to each child's wrists. Encourage the children to keep the strips moving by twisting, twirling, and waving their arms while music is played.

All the rope activities can also be done with a scarf.

Purpose: Imagery
Gross motor control

GUESS WHOSE HOUSE

Materials: Snapshot of each child
Construction paper

Have the child paste his picture about an inch from the bottom center of an 8½ x 11" sheet of paper. Help him to cut a door in a smaller square of paper. Fold the door back and paste the "house" on the paper so the door may be opened to show the child inside. Paste on a triangle roof. The child may add windows, chimney, etc.

Purpose: Self concept

ROPE SHAPES

A child learns concepts by encountering them in a variety of meaningful situations. This activity serves many purposes and teaches shapes too!

Materials: A 3' length of clothesline for each child.

Ask the children to:

Make a straight line on the floor with their rope.
Walk forward and backward beside the rope.

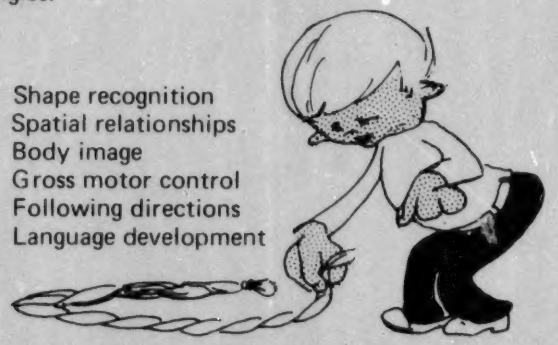
Make a circle on the floor with their rope.
Stand inside the circle.
Step out of the circle.
Stand beside the circle.
Walk around the circle.
Walk around it with one foot inside the circle and one out.
Jump over the circle.
Sit in the circle and make themselves small so they won't touch the rope.

Put two ropes together and make a larger circle.

Put all the ropes together to make a giant circle.

Another day, follow the same procedure making squares, triangles, and rectangles.

Purpose: Shape recognition
Spatial relationships
Body image
Gross motor control
Following directions
Language development



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THANKSGIVING

Cooking. Make cranberry sauce, but first let the children see, smell, and feel the berries. Cook the cranberries with sugar and water. Have the children guess what will take place.

Cornucopias. Drop some glue in a bugle-shaped snack and let the children arrange miniature fruit or tiny sprays of artificial or dried flowers in the cornucopia.

Nuts. Have the children take turns sorting mixed nuts (in the shells), putting almonds, walnuts, filberts, pecans, and Brazil nuts in separate piles. Have the children try to open the nuts, then ask for suggestions for different ways to crack them. Let the children try out their ideas.

Gobble blobs. Each child drops some thick tempera or finger paint of any color in the center of a piece of white construction paper. Fold the paper in half and rub the outside surface in all directions to move the paint randomly. Then open the paper and have the child use the blob as a basis for a turkey. Use crayons or felt-tip markers to add the finishing details.

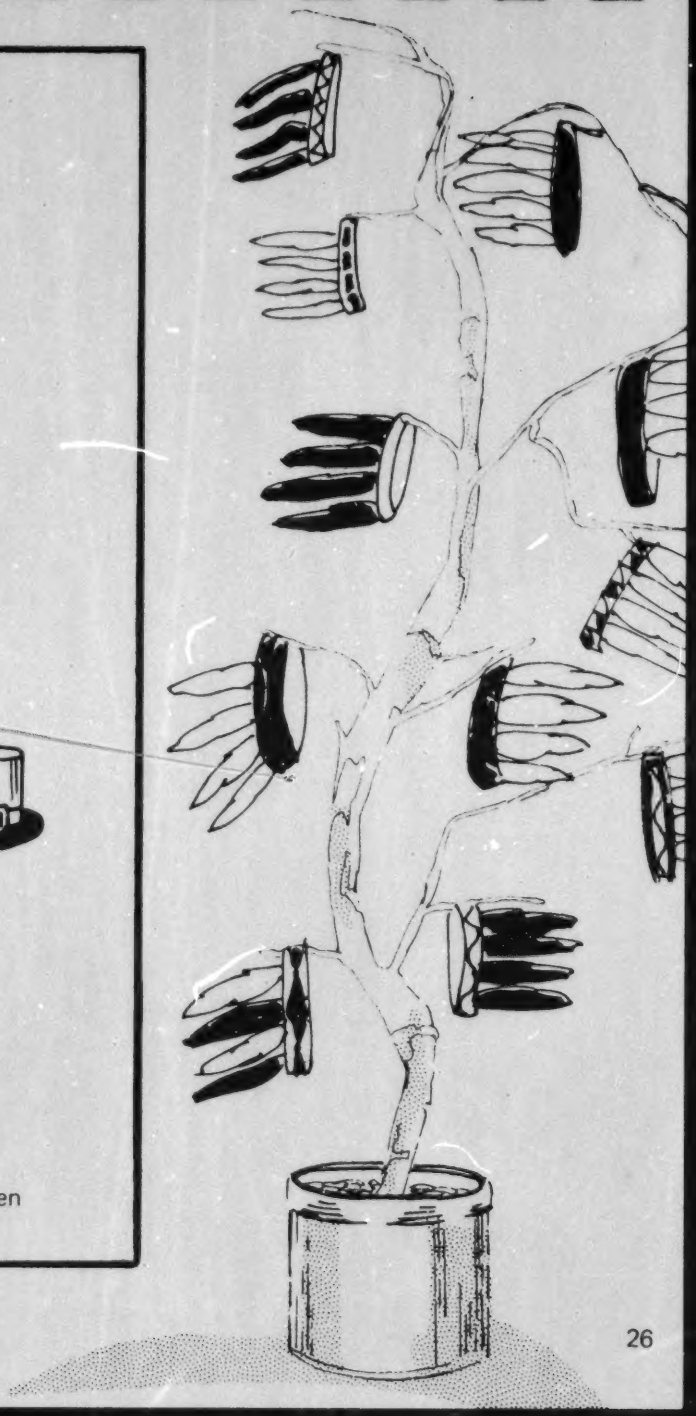
Hand turkeys. Have each child dip his hand in brown tempera and put his handprint, with fingers outspread, on yellow construction paper. The thumb will be the turkey's head, and the fingers the tail feathers. All that must be added is a beak, an eye, and legs.

Pilgrim hats. For boys, use a 12" x 18" sheet of black construction paper for the brim and a 9" x 12" piece rolled for the crown. Add a yellow construction paper buckle.

For the girls, use two paper plates. Trim plates as shown. If hat is cut exactly the right size, it will stay in place by itself. Punch a hole in each side so that a ribbon or string tie may be added.

Song. Sing "Over the River and Through the Woods." It's an old favorite and the children still love it.

Purpose: Historical



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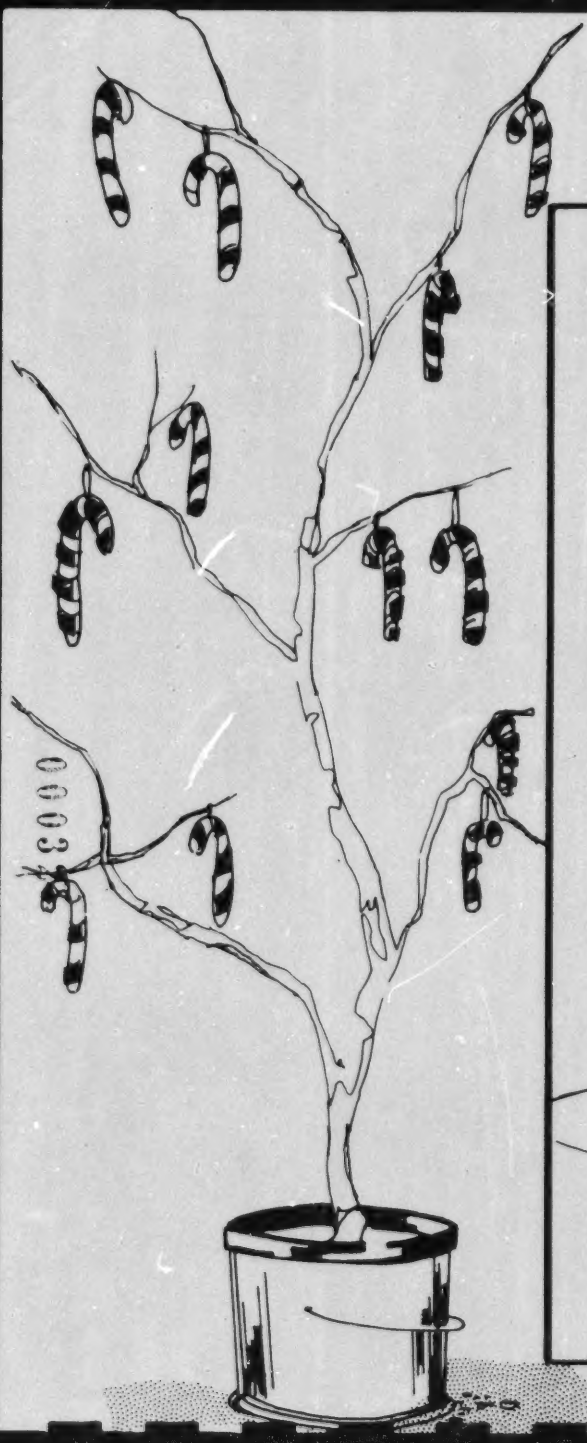


DECEMBER

PICTURE GAMES

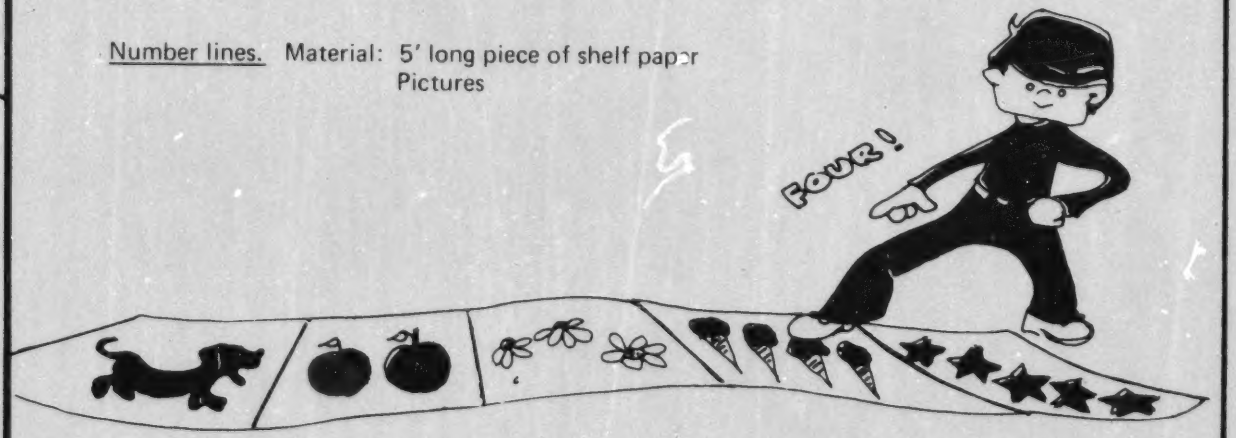
Shape dominoes. Materials: Set of 2" x 4" dominoes
The symbols on the dominoes are circles, squares, triangles, stars, diamonds, and rectangles. Place one domino on the table and then ask each child in turn to draw from the pile. If one end of his domino matches the one on the table, he places it down matching end to end.

To raise the level of difficulty for this game, make a set of dominoes using pictures representing the shapes. For example, the circle card could have pictures of the sun, a ball, a balloon, a clock, and a lollipop. The square could have a window, a box, a piece of chocolate.

Jumbo dominoes. Materials: Set of 9" x 12" dominoes.
Make jumbo dominoes by pasting two large pictures on a sheet of construction paper. Use pictures of animals, flowers, foods, toys, furniture, etc.

The game is played on the floor following the procedure for shape dominoes.

Number lines. Material: 5' long piece of shelf paper
Pictures

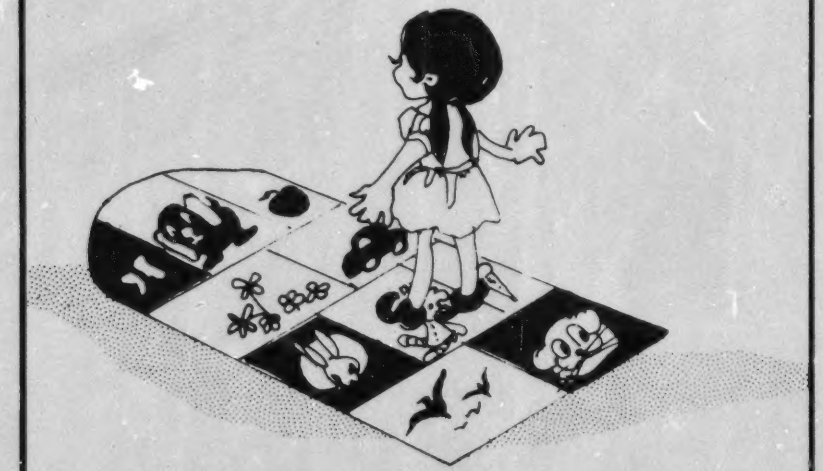


Make a floor number line from a roll of shelf paper. Divide into one-foot segments and then paste or draw pictures of various numbers of objects in each square. Call a number and have a child jump on the square with the correct number of objects.

PICTURE GAMES

Hopscotch. Materials: 10 large mounted pictures

Instead of using numbers, put pictures of animals or other objects in the squares. Ask the children to hop to the ball, hop to the apple, dog, etc.



AUDITORY PERCEPTION

Long and short. Materials: Peg board for each child
10 short and 10 long pegs

Hum either a long note, m-m-m-m-m-m, or a short note, m-m. Ask the children to place either a long or a short peg in the board as each note is sounded, starting at the top left corner, working from left to right. At the end of the activity, have the children read their boards (long, short, short, long, etc.)

Purpose: Auditory discrimination
Left-right progression
Concept development

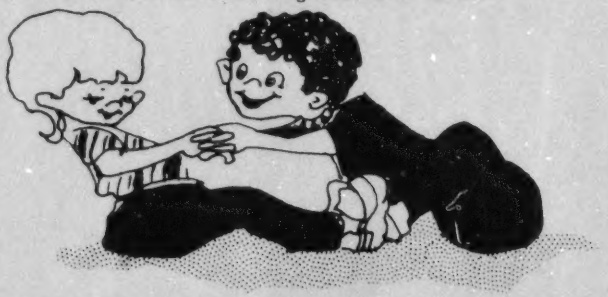
00033

PARTNERS

Partner activities provide opportunities for the transition from parallel play (playing along side another child) to cooperative play (playing with other children). They are most useful for developmentally delayed children because one child can serve as the leader and leadership roles can be reversed after the skill has been established. They are good fun and the contact can be agressive or passive.

Sawing Wood. Have the partners clasp hands and stand facing each other with one foot forward. They are to "saw wood" by turning to the right and then to the left stretching the arm out to the side in the direction of the turn.

Row, Row, Row the Boat. Have two children sit on the floor facing each other with the soles of their feet touching and hands clasped. As the teacher sings "Row, row, row the boat" the children alternate rocking back and forth.



Pease Porridge Hot. Have the partners sit Indian fashion opposite each other. As the teacher rhythmically recites "Pease Porridge Hot" the children alternately clap their own hands and then the hands of their partners.

Wheelbarrows. One child kneels in an all-fours position, with his hands flat on the floor. The partner steps between the first child's legs and picks up his legs. Then they try to walk about wheeling the barrow.

Purpose: Gross motor control
Social development

DECEMBER

DECEMBER

SPATIAL CONCEPTS

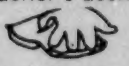
Concept development comes from experience, experience in associating and assimilating the things perceived. A word that represents an idea that is not within the experience of the child will not have any meaning for him.

Up and Down. Materials: Box and sheet of paper

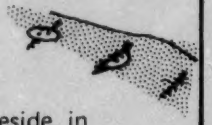
Ask the children to reach up to the lights, the ceiling, and their heads, and to reach down to the floor, their shoes, and their knees. Then place a box on the table. Have the children identify up and down on it. Then relate "up" to the top by having the children touch the top of the box and "down" to the bottom. Point out the sides of the box and count them.

When the children have established space concepts in relation to the box, hold up a piece of paper and have the children find the top, bottom, and sides of the paper. Place the paper flat on the table and show the children that the "top" and the "bottom" do not change. (Rotating the plane confuses some children and they must learn that the "top" is not always highest up.) Have them draw a line from the top to the bottom of the page.

Front and back. Ask the children to find the front and back of their bodies, their hands, their heads, the teacher's desk, a chair, a coat, a book, and the piece of paper.



Through. "Through" should be introduced in relation to front and back. Have the children put a button through a buttonhole, put a string through a bead, crawl through a hula hoop or an old tire.



Prepositions. Materials: Box and small object

Have the children put the object in, on, under, beside, in front of, and behind the box.

POP ART

Reading readiness skills call for an awareness of sequence and the ability to organize and remember a series of actions, events, or ideas in their proper sequence.

Popcorn. One morning, make popcorn as the children watch and listen. Describe each action as you do it. "I am heating the pan. Now I'm putting in some oil." etc. Have a popcorn party.

Later in the day, ask the children how the popcorn was made. See if they can remember the steps in sequence.

Dramatization. Form a circle. The child who is "Popcorn" goes into the center. When the heat is turned on, he slowly lifts first one foot and then the other. As the heat increases, he should jump and pop all over.

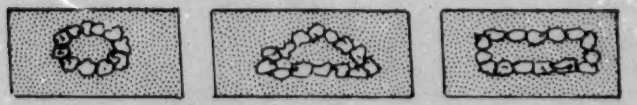
Chant:

Children: Dance, popcorn, dance!
Hop, hop, hop.

Teacher: Whirl and twirl and turn around.
Leap and spring and bounce and bound.

Children: Dance, popcorn, dance!
Pop, pop, pop.

Art. Have the children glue popcorn around the edge of shapes.



Make a snow scene on dark paper, glueing popcorn for falling snow.

Purpose: Creative art
Fine motor skills
Sequential memory

C0034

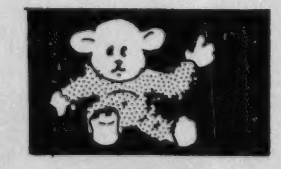
TEXTURES

All learning proceeds from the concrete to the abstract. Experience integrating visual and tactile perceptions will stimulate abstract language. The word "fuzzy," for example, cannot take on meaning for the child until he has seen, touched, and handled many fuzzy things.

Tactile pictures. Materials: A set of tactile picture cards.

For example:

A bear with a coat of fake fur
A kitchen table with a fabric or oilcloth tablecloth
A framed aluminum foil mirror
A pine tree with tiny pine cones added
A lamb with cotton "wool"
A rabbit with a cotton pom-pom tail
A chest of drawers from a piece of plywood with knobs painted on
A sack of potatoes with the sack made from burlap
A bird with real feathers
A window with dotted swiss curtains
A bed with a satin bedspread
A girl with pigtails tied with real ribbons
An oceanview with a sandpaper beach.
A girl with a woolen coat
A boy with real jeans or corduroy pants
A room with a real carpet
A beach scene with real shells
A window made of saran wrap.



Purpose: Tactile discrimination
Language development

Individual activity

CLASSIFICATION

One of the most important mental processes for successful living is that of classification, putting one's environment into some sort of understandable order. Classification involves sorting, grouping, comparing and ordering. The children must also learn that there are many ways of classifying.

Objects. Materials: Many small objects.

The children will have had prior experience in sorting beads, pegs, and other objects by color. Give them more experience by having them sort objects into two piles, one that has a special characteristic (round) and the other pile for those that do not have the property.

In the next step, let the children sort for two characteristics (green and round).

Blocks. Materials: A set of attribute blocks

A 32-piece set of wooden attribute blocks that contains triangles, squares, circles, and diamonds in two sizes and four colors is ideal for this activity. The blocks can be sorted by size, shape, color, or combinations of these and are easy for the children to handle.

After much experience with the blocks, give a child the set with one block missing. He should be able to discover which block is missing and describe its properties. ("It is a little yellow square block.")

Purpose: Concept development
Classification

Individual activity

00035

DECEMBER

DECEMBER

COMMUNITY HELPERS

Preschool is the place to provide experiences which will help the children extend the range of their interests and knowledge. How the child relates with people will depend on the opportunities he is given to make contact with people.

Field trips. Take the children to all the usual interesting places, but also try to personalize your trips by getting fathers involved in your program. There's no finer way to build up a child's self-concept than to take the class to see his dad driving an earth pushing machine, clerking in the local hardware store, cutting hair, or riding a tractor! Talk about the field trip ahead of time so the children know where they are going. Let them anticipate it, enjoy it, and talk about it afterward.

Class visitors. Plumbers, electricians and auto mechanics with samples of the tools of their trade make fascinating visitors. They'll come between jobs or on a rainy day, if only you will ask them. A mason came to one pre-school class and demonstrated how to mix cement. Each child made a little brick. His name was inscribed on it before it set. The rest of the year the children made towers and walls with their home-made bricks.

Craft project. Materials: ½-pint milk cartons
Wooden spoons
Scraps of construction paper

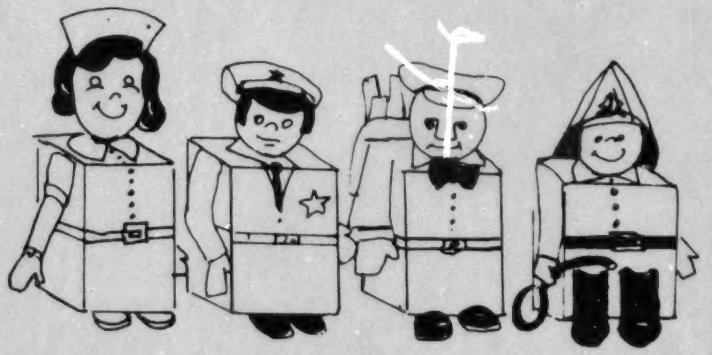
Talk about the mailman, for example, what he wears, what he does, what he carries the mail in, etc.

Have the children make cards for Mom and Dad and put them in an envelope. After you've addressed them, take the children to the post office. Let the children buy the stamps and put them on the top right-hand corner of their envelopes. (There's a language lesson in spatial concepts right there.)

COMMUNITY HELPERS

The postmaster will usually take the children behind the scenes and may even let them cancel their own letter and put it in the proper sorting box. It is a good idea to plan this trip on a Friday so the children can be at home when the mailman delivers their letter.

Then follow up in class by making a mailman out of the milk carton and wooden spoon.



A similar procedure may be used to introduce each of the other community helpers.

Purpose: Concept development
Social development
Language development

GINGERBREAD

Bake a large gingerbread boy from a package of gingerbread cake mix in a special pan if available or shape it from a sheet cake. Decorate it with frosting. Then tell the story of "The Gingerbread Boy." Have the children decorate construction paper gingerbread boys or cut out gingerbread boy cookies with a special cookie cutter.

000036

00037

RHYTHMS

Music begins with rhythm, rhythm with words and body movements. Simple rhythm experiences will build a background for more complicated rhythms.

Names. Beat a drum to the rhythm of each child's name.
Bobby Smith (tum-ta tum)
Jane Remington (tum tum-ta-tum)

Words. Have the children chant the names of categories of things or holiday words while clapping their hands in rhythm or tapping out the beat on rhythm sticks.

Weather words: hot – cold
wet – dry
sun-ny – rain-y
cloud-y day – snow-y day
Rain-rain-go-a-way
Come a-gain some oth-er day
_____wants to play
(name)

Thanksgiving: nuts
tur-key
pump-kin pie
cran-ber-ry sauce

Have the children clap each other's hands in rhythm to Pease Porridge Hot, Pease Porridge Cold.

Music. Have the children clap loud and soft, fast and slow to suitable music. Have the children walk slowly to "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star," and march to the "Caissons Go Rolling Along."

Place rice in a small tinfoil pan. Staple another pan on top. It makes noise like a maracas but plays like a tambourine.

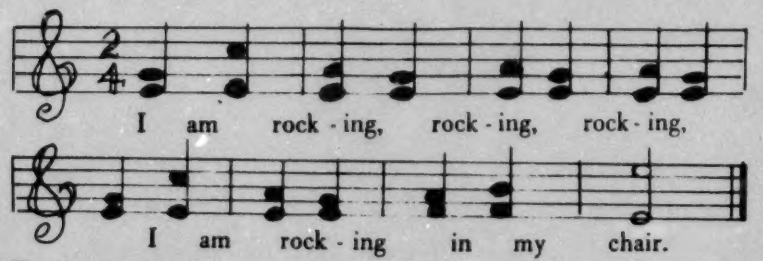
Records. "Adventures in Rhythm" with Ella Jenkins, Folkways Records, includes music for rhythm sticks and drums.

RHYTHMS

Rocking. Let the children take turns rocking in a rocking chair as this song is sung. The rest of the class sway in time to the music.

I Am Rocking

Words and Music by Marian Lyle Peden



The Cookie Jar Game. The children chant in unison rhythmically.

All: Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar?
(child's name) stole the cookie from the cookie jar.
Child named: Who, me?
All: Yes, you.
Child named: Couldn't be.
All: Then who?
Child named: (Another child's name) stole the cookie from the cookie jar.
Last child named: Who, me?
And so on until all children have been named.

Purpose: Rhythm
Language development
Motor planning
Self concept

DECEMBER

DECEMBER

CHANUKAH

Chanukah is the Feast of the Lights. It commemorates the victory of Hebrew soldiers over the wicked Syrians. It is a happy time of celebration for Jewish families.

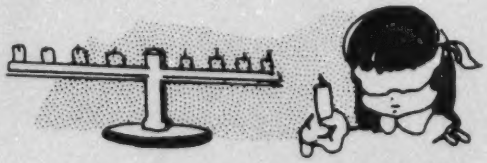
Spin the Draydel. A draydel is a four-sided top used on Chanukah. Each side has a different Hebrew letter.

The game can be played using nuts, wrapped candies, raisins, or tiny marshmallows. Each child starts with the same number of treats and puts one into a dish in the center of the circle. As each child takes a turn spinning the top, he chants:

> Chanukah is here today;
> So with the draydel we will play.
> Spin, spin, spin. Then count the score.
> "Gimmel" means you get some more.

The letters on the draydel tell the child what he must do. The Hebrew letter Nun means do nothing, Gimme! means the child is to take all the treats in the dish, Hay means the child may take half of the treats and Sheen means that the child must add a treat to the dish. The game traditionally continues until one child has all the treats.

Pin the Candle on the Menorah. Chanukah is celebrated for eight days and nights by lighting a candle in a special candle holder called a menorah each night of the holiday. The ninth candle is used to light the other candles.



Draw a picture of a Menorah, but omit the top candle. Tape the picture to the wall. Give each child a paper candle. Blindfold the children if they don't object, or have them cover their eyes and try to put their candle on the Menorah.

CHRISTMAS

Excitement runs high at Christmas time, therefore, it is an ideal time to stimulate oral language.

Christmas trees. Materials: Popcorn
Several colors of powdered tempera
Large green paper triangles

Pop the corn without salt or butter. Drop small amounts of the popped corn into bags of powdered tempera, a different color for each bag. Have the children shake the bags. The tempera will be absorbed and the corn will be beautifully colored. The children may glue the colored corn here and there on the paper tree to represent lights and ornaments. The remainder of the tree is filled in with green popcorn.

Christmas stockings. Materials: Green and red paper stocking
Green or red yarn
Cotton

Match front and back of the stockings and punch holes around all but the top edge of the stockings. Have the children lace them together with yarn. To add a finishing touch, let them glue cotton around the top.

Cookies. The children will like making their own cookless cookies for the class Christmas party. All that is needed is a box of graham crackers, white icing, and colored sprinkles for decoration.

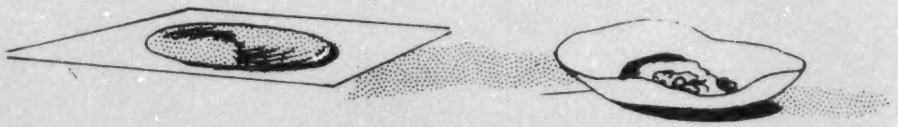
CC003

CHRISTMAS

Gift for Parents. Materials: Old phonograph records

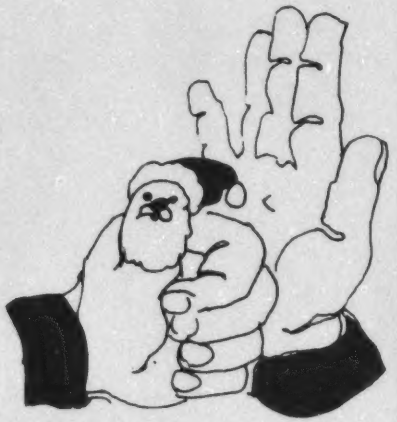
Put the records, one at a time, into a 250° oven for 20 seconds to soften them. They can then be shaped into bowls and serving dishes.

Paste a pretty picture in the center from old Christmas cards.



Finger play.

Here is the chimney (make fist, close thumb)
Here is the top (palm of hand on top of fist)
Open the lid (remove hand quickly)
And out Santa will pop. (pop up thumb)



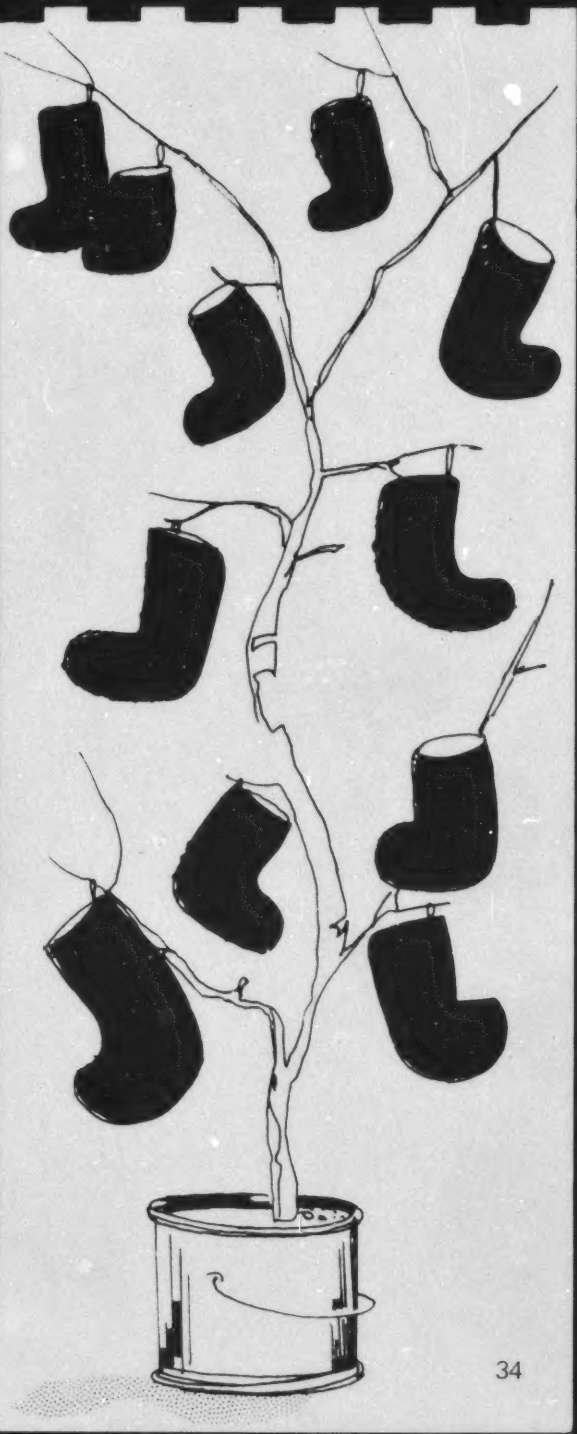
Song. To the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

Ring, ring, ring the bells.
Ring them loud and clear.
To tell the children everywhere
That Christmas time is here.

Parents' Visit. Paste several stars on the back of each of the children's hands or spread on diluted water-soluble glue and sprinkle on glitter. Have the children chant or sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," while opening and closing their fingers. If glitter is used, supervise the wash-up afterwards.

Purpose: Fun

Christmas wrap. Pour a small amount of green and red tempera in shallow dishes. Have available several types of Christmas cookie cutters and large sheets of newsprint. The children may dip the cutters in the paint and design their own wrapping for their parents' gifts.



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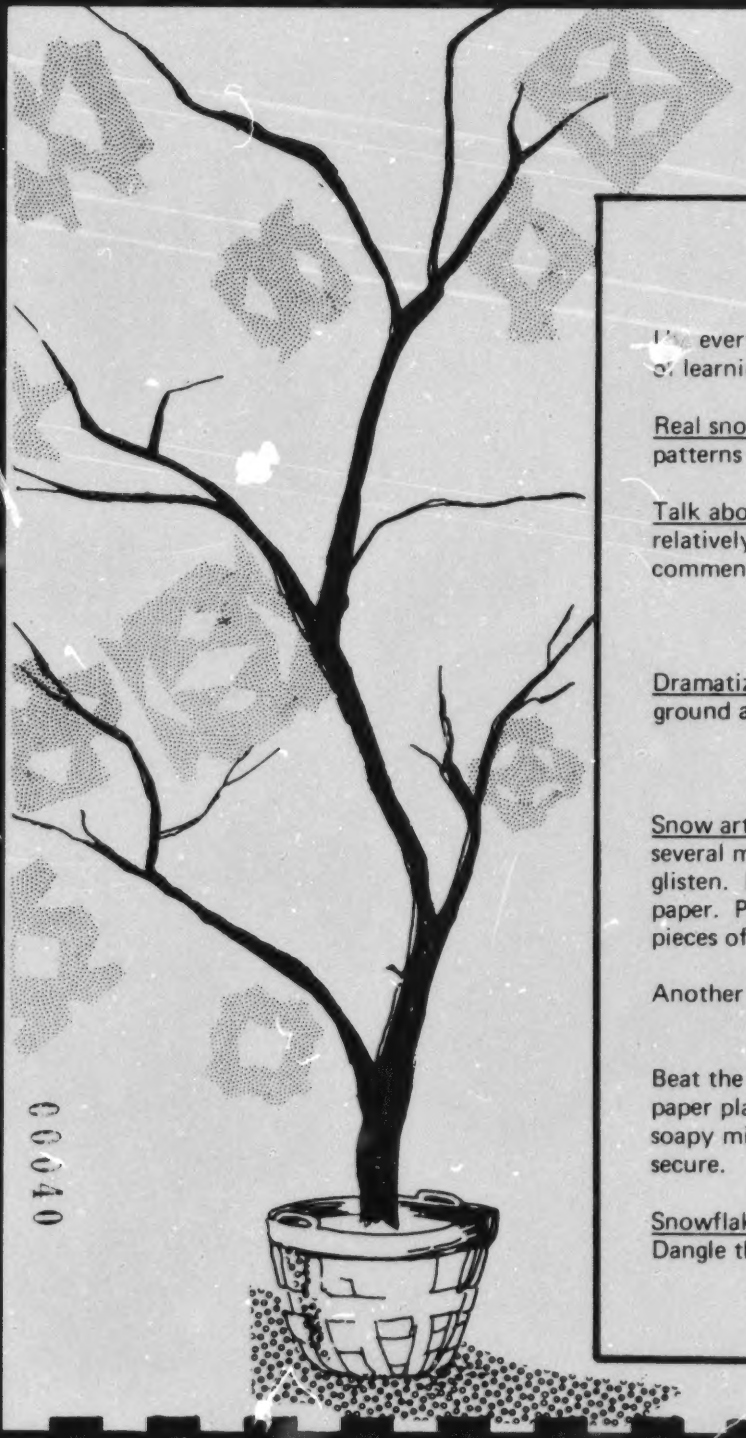
DECEMBER



JANUARY

SNOW SCENES

[illegible] every opportunity to structure play in a meaningful way. Play is for fun, for exercise, and a way of learning. It can be challenging and should stimulate the imagination.

Real snow. Catch snowflakes on a piece of black construction paper. Let the children examine the patterns under a magnifying glass. Work fast!

Talk about snow. Then fill a jar with snow from the side of a well travelled road and another with relatively clean snow. Mark the snow level on each jar. Give the children a chance to observe and comment on what's happening to the snow during the melting process.

Purpose: Science concepts

Dramatization. Let the children pretend to be whirling, swirling snowflakes falling softly to the ground as suitable music is played.

Purpose: Imagery

Snow art. Have the children make snow pictures on dark blue construction paper. There are several methods that can be used. By sprinkling table salt on top of dots of glue, the snow will glisten. Effective snow pictures may also be made by gluing puffs of cotton or popcorn on dark paper. Put a small amount of white tempera in a shallow dish and have the children dip small pieces of cut up sponge in the paint and daub on the paper.

Another day, make a soap snow scene. Materials: Equal parts Ivory Snowflakes and water.
Small pictures of birds, deer, trees, etc.

Beat the soap and water to a thick froth. Let each child spread some of the mixture on a small paper plate or jar lid. Have the children stand the pictures cut from old Christmas cards in the soapy mixture. Sprinkle with glitter and dry overnight. When soap hardens, the pictures will be secure.

Snowflakes. Fold a piece of lightweight paper in fourths and let the children cut off the corners. Dangle the finished products from the ceiling.

Purpose: Fine motor control

CCC40

SNOW SCENES

Finger play. The Snowman

Let's roll a tiny snowball
(Make a ball with hands)
'Til it gets big and round,
(Make circle with arms)
Let's roll it through the snowdrifts
(Pretend to push it through the snow)
It doesn't make a sound.
(Whisper the words)
Give the snowman head and eyes
(Point to head and eyes)
A broom for him to hold
(Pretend to hold broom)
A mouth, a nose, and a scarf
(Point to each)
So snowman won't get cold.
(Shiver)

Action song. To the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot"

I'm a little snowman round and fat.
Here is my scarf and here is my hat.
When the sun comes out to chat
Watch me melt away just like that.
(Curl into the tinjest ball)

Snow Angels. After a fresh snowfall, bundle the children up warmly and take them outdoors to make snow angels. Have the children lie on their backs in the snow, spread their legs to make the angel's skirt as they spread their arms to make angel wings.

Purpose: Gross motor control

Story Time. Read the story The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats. The appealing pictures in this story of a little boy's adventures in deep snow are sure to delight everyone.

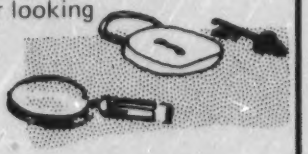
C0041

SELF DISCOVERY TABLE

Through play, children begin to orient themselves to their immediate world. They learn to solve problems, clarify confusions, and build concepts by discovering on their own. If the classroom provides the opportunity, the children will do the learning.

Materials:

Various types of padlocks and keys
Cash register and play money
Hole puncher and scrap paper
Magnets and lots of little things
(some the magnet will pick up and some not)
Sheets of various colored acetate for looking through
Egg timer
Compass
Prism
Pan balance scale
Yard stick
Pullout tape measure
Telescope
Magnifying glass
Old typewriter



Put just a few of the suggestions on the list out at a time. Change the attractions from time to time. The children will find their own way to use them and to learn.

Individual activity

Purpose: Concept development
Problem solving
Imagination
Self-concept

JANUARY

LISTENING

The following story may be used to help children hear differences in voice pitch. It's fun to tell the story using sock puppets.

How Helen Hummingbird Learned to Hum

Helen was a baby hummingbird who lived in a forest.
Helen was just learning to hum,
And all she could make was a weak little m-m-m.

How she envied her mother who could hum up m-m-m
And down m-m-m-
And sometimes up and down m-m-m-m-m

One day Helen's friend Henry said he would teach her to hum. First Henry asked Helen to listen.

"Am I humming high or low? m-" (high)
"High," replied Helen.
"Good. Now listen to this. m-" (low)

"Am I humming up or down? m-m-m-
"Up."
"Right again," said Henry.
"Now, Helen, let's see if you can hum."
"Maybe the boys and girls will hum with you."

The teacher may then have the children imitate humming high notes and low notes, asking them each time which notes they are humming. Do the same, humming up and down the scale.

Purpose: Auditory discrimination
Concept development
Listening

ROPE FUN

A major area of development in the preschool years is growth in motor ability, balance, gross motor control, and motor planning.

Materials: A 3' length of clothesline for each child.

Ask the children to:

Hold one end of their rope in each hand and to stretch their arms out to each side.
Hold the rope so that one end is up and one is down.
Hold the rope so that it passes between their legs.
Stand on the rope.
Put the rope on the floor and jump over it.
Hold the rope stretched out high over their heads.
Hold the rope stretched out behind their backs.
Hold the rope so that it touches both hands and feet at the same time.
Hold the rope so that it touches only one foot and one hand.
Hold the rope so that it touches one hand and two feet.
Tie the rope around their waists.
Pass the rope under one leg and over the other.

Purpose: Body image
Motor planning
Gross motor control
Following directions
Concept development
Imitation of movement

00042

BALL GAMES

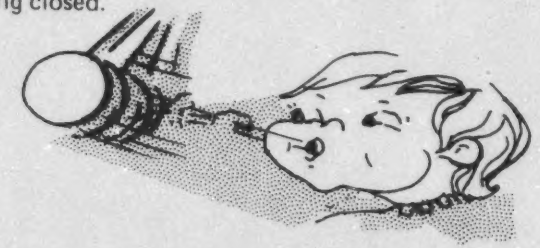
Ball activities will help children learn to estimate time and distance.

Balloons. Balloon play is a good way to ready the children for ball activities. A balloon moves slowly, a child can follow its movement and have time to plan his own motor movements before he has to catch it.

Bean bags. Bean bags are easily caught and managed by young hands. Divide the children into two teams and have them stand in two straight lines. The relay race can involve passing the bean bag over the head to a child behind or passing it between the legs.

Another day, have the children toss bean bags into a large box or waste basket. Gradually increase the distance from the goal and decrease the size of the container as the children's skills improve.

Nylon balls. Soft, easily handled balls may be made by stuffing an old nylon stocking with tissue paper or crumbled newspaper. Round it into a ball shape, cut off the stocking and sew the opening closed.



Styrofoam or whiffle ball. Hang a styrofoam ball on a string from the ceiling. Swing it gently and have each child in turn follow the movement with his eyes without moving his head. Children who have difficulty following the ball with their eyes as it moves from left to right are likely to have difficulty keeping their place when they begin to read in school.

Purpose: Visual tracking

00043

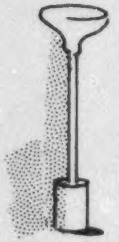
BALL GAMES

Ball games. Start with big balls and progress to smaller ones.

Tower ball. Build a tower of large blocks. Have the children form a circle around the tower and take turns rolling the ball in an attempt to knock down the tower.

Corral ball. Six balls are used in this exciting game. The children are seated in a large circle on the floor. The object of the game is to keep all the balls rolling in the corral and to let none escape. The game ends when all the balls have rolled out of the circle.

T-ball. Place a plumber's helper in a coffee can filled with wet cement. When the cement sets, you will have a fine ball stand just the right height for the children to practice batting with a plastic bat and whiffle ball.



Purpose: Visual motor coordination

Ping pong balls. A ping pong ball race is a fine activity to develop breath control. Let five children race at a time. Print their names on the balls and mark a track on the floor or on a table. At the signal "Go," the children blow the ping pong balls to the finish line.

Small group activity

Purpose: Breath control

JANUARY

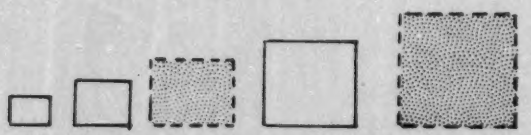
SIZE PLACES

To develop number concepts, the children must also understand the principle of sequence. Stacking cones and nesting barrels will give the children experience with size. Graduated blocks and knobbed cylinders varying in height and diameter offer the child experience with the seriation of volume.

Cans. Let the children nest and stack various sized tin cans. Let them put the plastic lids on 1-, 2-, and 3-pound coffee cans.

Individual activity

Paper. Materials: 6 squares of paper of same color ranging in size from 1" to 7".



Tape the 1", 3", 5" and 7" squares to the wall in order of size. Hang them low enough for the children to reach. After the children have had time to study the squares, ask them to close their eyes. Take one of the squares down and say "Open your eyes, who can hang this in the right place?" Increase the number of squares that are taken down each time until they are all down and the children can hang them up in the right order. Increase the difficulty by using all six squares, making the the graduations in size smaller. It's even more difficult using circles and rectangles.

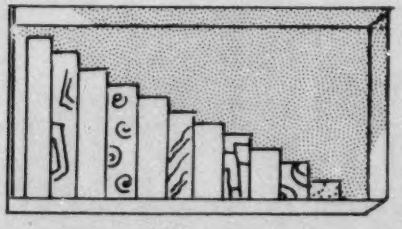
Small group activity

00044

SIZE PLACES

Linoleum. Materials: Candy box with lid
Assorted patterns and lengths of 1" wide linoleum strips

Glue a sample graduated length pattern of linoleum strips into the lid of a candy box. Give the child a pile of assorted strips and ask him to make a similar pattern. (The sides of the box frame the child's work and make it easier to visualize the differences in size.)



In the next step, ask the child to put the strips in size order without using a sample, first in the box, and then on the table without guidelines to follow.

Adapted from Cangemi

Straws. Materials: 6 paper straws

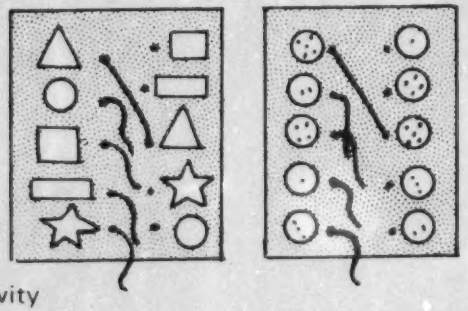
Keep one straw full length, cut an inch off the second straw, 2" off the third, and so on until you have six straws in graduated lengths. Mix the straws and ask the child to arrange them in stair steps. Children often look at only one end of the straw and let the other end stick out irregularly, which means that they haven't arranged them according to length. Suggest to the child, in that case, that he line them up even with the edge of the table.

Individual activities Purpose: Size sequencing

MATCHING BOARD

Materials: 9" x 12" tagboard
Plastic lacing

Paste a row of shapes down one side of the board. Paste another row of the same shapes in different order down the other side. Knot 10" lengths of lacing and push through to front side of board beside each shape on the left. Punch holes next to each shape on the right. Have the child connect the matching shapes. This can also be used to match colors or numbers.



Individual activity

CLASSIFICATION

Pictures. Materials: 5–10 mounted pictures for each of several categories
A box for each category

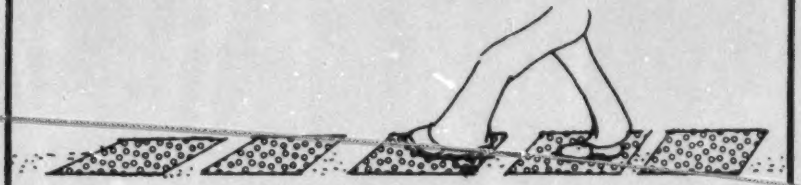
Paste pictures of fruit, vegetables, nuts, animals, toys, buildings, transportation, clothing, etc., on cards. Have boxes labeled with a picture from the various categories on the table. Make a game of this by dealing the cards and asking the players in turn to sort his cards according to classification or use as an independent activity. Do not make a point of correcting the child but discuss his reasons for sorting as he did.

Small group activity

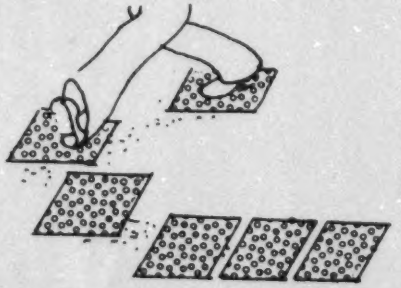
STEPPING STONES

Motor planning involves the coordination of visual judgments of space, distance, and time.

Materials: Squares of colored carpet, tiles, or construction paper (taped to the floor).

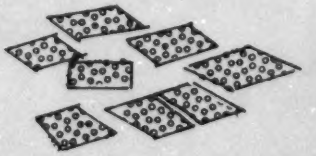


Arrange the squares in a straight line. Suggest that they are stepping stones across a river and ask the children to walk on the squares without getting their feet wet.



Rearrange the squares so that some are close together and some are further apart. This will require some spatial judgments on the children's part.

Rearrange the squares close together in random fashion. Ask the children to step only on the squares of a certain color.



Purpose: Balance
Visual motor coordination
Motor planning
Directionality
Distance judgment
Impulse control

00045

JANUARY

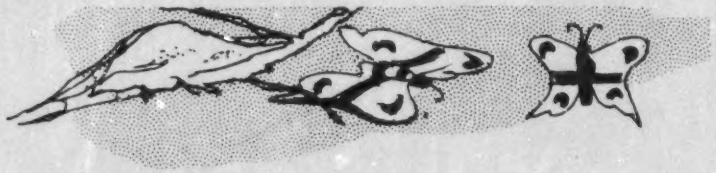
LIVING THINGS

The young child needs more than just the experience of naming animals. He needs to be able to handle and care for a variety of living things.

Pets. Hamsters, gerbils, rabbits, guinea pigs, and fish all make interesting classroom pets.

Hatching eggs. Watching incubated eggs hatch is one of the most exciting activities for a preschool class and it can be done in an electric skillet. Ask the hatchery for six eggs that will hatch in 4 or 5 days. Wrap well to keep them warm from hatchery to classroom. Line an electric skillet with a thick layer of cotton, add a wet sponge, and set the thermostat on "warm". Use a thermometer to see that the pan stays at 98°. One day after the eggs hatch, transfer the chicks to a box.

Cocoons. If you cannot find a cocoon, they are available for 60¢ from Mr. Duke Downey, Box 558, Sheridan, Wyoming 82801. They are never-fail. A beautiful cecropia moth will come out in April or May. It looks like a butterfly with cross-bands of black, white and red on each wing and also half-moon shapes. It will live for about three weeks.



A cage for the cocoon is easily made. Fill a metal pie plate with Plaster of Paris. While it is still wet, insert a circle of screen about 10" high, and stand some twigs up in the center. After the plaster is dry, sprinkle some dirt and grass on top. Put the cocoon in, cover with a smaller pie plate and wait for exciting developments.

C0046

LIVING THINGS

Praying Mantis. The cage described for the cocoon is also a fine way to observe a praying mantis. The class will have to catch live food for it, butterflies and grasshoppers, but it will lay eggs on the twig, and the class will see hundreds of baby praying mantises develop. Turn them loose in a field after a few weeks.

Story Time. A delightful story that teaches children how to make friends with pets is Leave Herbert Alone by Alma Marshak Whitney.

Purpose: Science concepts

FISH

Materials:

Styrofoam meat trays
Pictures of fish or paper fish shapes
Saran Wrap
Sand or aquarium gravel

Have the children paste royal blue construction paper in the bottom of the meat trays, then cut out pictures of colorful fish or draw the eyes, mouth and fins on pre-cut paper fish. Glue the sand at the bottom of the meat tray and the fish in the center. Green strips of plastic cut from a trash bag look like aquatic plants and may be added. Cover the entire tray with Saran Wrap to produce an underwater effect.

Purpose: Creative art
Concept development

WATCH IT GROW!

Activities which encourage the children to satisfy their curiosity assist their growth in self-direction. All children are fascinated with living, growing things. Through observations of the changes, many of their own questions will be answered.

Plants. Plants are an ideal tool to teach about living things. The children can learn by trial and error that plants need water and light to live.

Bird's nest. Put a bird's nest in a shallow pan of water for several weeks. Wondrous things will sprout!

Potato lawn. Give each child a potato. Make a slice in the top and let them scoop out some of the potato to make a shallow indentation. Put a little grass seed in the hole and sprinkle dirt on top. The moisture from the potato will germinate the seed and the grass will grow and will need trimming from time to time.

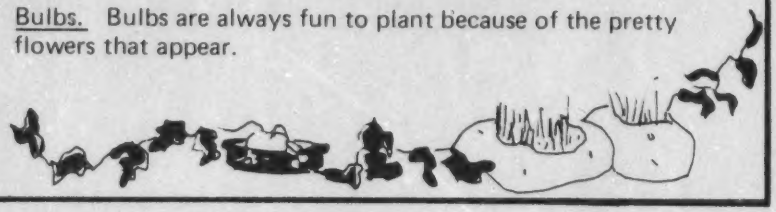
Faces can be drawn on the potatoes with Magic Marker and then the children can pretend that the grass is hair and take it to the barbershop for a haircut.

Celery. Put one stalk of celery in a glass of water colored with blue food coloring and another stalk in a glass of water colored with red. Check the celery in half an hour.

White daisies or carnations will work too.

Carrots. Cut the top inch off a carrot or beet and place it in ¼" of water in a jar lid. It will grow pretty ruffly leaves.

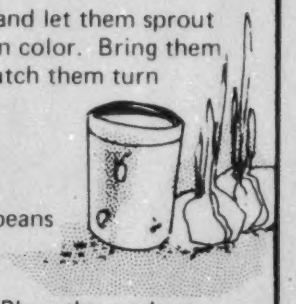
Bulbs. Bulbs are always fun to plant because of the pretty flowers that appear.



00047

WATCH IT GROW!

Onions. Put some onions in a dark closet and let them sprout until quite tall. The sprouts will be white in color. Bring them to a sunny window and the children can watch them turn green.



Seeds. Materials: Drinking glass
Blotter
Fruit seeds or lima beans

Wet the blotter, then roll it inside a glass. Place the seeds at different spots between the glass and the blotter. Add ½" of water. Change the water every few days. The children will be able to observe the daily changes as the skin of the seeds wrinkles, fine roots develop, the stem sprouts, and finally, leaves appear.

Song. To the tune of "Rock-a-bye Baby"

I've planted my seeds,
I've watered them, too
Now I will wait
And see what they do.

Crystal garden. Not really a living thing, but it grows.

Materials: 1 tablespoon laundry bluing
½ cup ammonia
Table salt
Charcoal, coal or porous brick

Mix ammonia and bluing. Add salt until no more dissolves in the mixture. Place charcoal in shallow dish or tinfoil pie tin and pour the mixture over the charcoal, and watch the crystals grow. For a colorful crystal garden, add food coloring as a final step. Start a new batch monthly.

Purpose: Science concepts
Observation

JANUARY

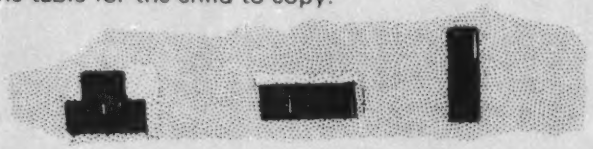
JANUARY

BLOCK PATTERNS

Reproducing block patterns will help develop visual memory skills which will enhance the children's ability to perceive and copy letters correctly when they go to school.

Materials: 2 sets of 1" color cubes

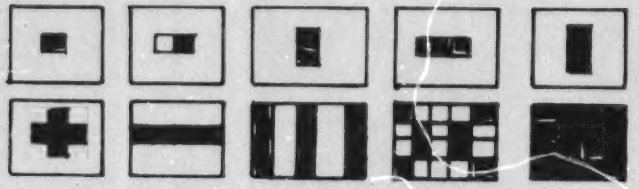
The teacher builds a simple pattern using three blocks then asks the child to build a matching pattern. Leave the sample pattern on the table for the child to copy.



Increase the level of difficulty by using 4, 5, and 6 blocks.

Materials: 1" color cubes
Block pattern cards

Present the children with very simple block patterns to copy at first and gradually increase the complexity of the designs. Later show the pattern and have the children try to reproduce them from memory.



Teach the children to read the patterns by naming the colors from left to right starting at the top left corner.

Parquetry blocks may be used in the same way.

Individual activity

Purpose: Visual memory
Left–right progression
Top to bottom progression

00048

SCREWY PLAY

There's lots of fun to be had from screwing things together and it's great developmental exercise.

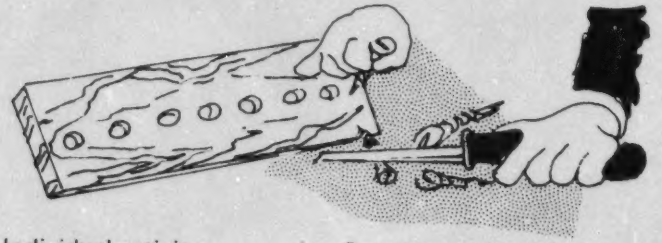
Materials: Anything that screws

Bottles. Have the child begin with an assortment of various sized screw top plastic bottles and jars that detergent, shampoo, and paste come in. Let the child unscrew all the covers and put them in one pile, mix them up, and then replace them on the bottles.

Plumbers' fittings. Collect an assortment of 2"–3" lengths of threaded pipes in various diameters, elbows, connecting links, etc. Store them in a box on the floor because they will be heavy and let the child create his own unusual junkyard sculpture.

Nuts and bolts. A box of various sized nuts and bolts require a higher developmental skill; the size discriminations are finer and little things are more difficult to handle.

Real screws. Put small starting holes spaced 2" apart in a piece of wood 20" long. To begin with, have ten short screws partly embedded in the wood so that the child only has to tighten the screws (working from left to right, of course.)
As the child becomes more skillful, let him try to put the screw in the hole by himself and tighten it.



Individual activity

Purpose: Left–right progression
Size discrimination
Fine motor control

CROSSING THE MIDLINE

Crossing the midline is a developmental milestone. Some children will reach for objects on their right with their right hand and for objects on their left with their left hand. They may find it difficult to cross their midline and reach for an object with the opposing hand. The ability to do this involves the integration of the function of the eyes and the extremities.

Mitten game. Materials: 8 pairs of construction paper mittens in the 8 basic colors. Tape the mittens to the wall in pairs. Ask each child in turn to place his hands on the red mittens. He must put his right hand on the right-hand mitten and his left hand on the left-hand mitten. Have each child find several colors of mittens.

Then rearrange the mittens by placing them in random fashion so that the child must cross his arms to correctly place his hands on a pair.

Footprints. Try a similar activity with footprints taped to the floor. Have the children stand on a matching pair of footprints, right foot on right foot-print and left on left.

Rearrange the footprints in a long line and have each child try to walk across the room placing the correct foot on the footprints.

Simon Says. Play "Simon Says" placing emphasis on crossing the midline. "Touch your elbow." "Use this hand (right) to touch this foot (left)." "Make your hands into fists and put one hand on top of the other."

Dot-to-Dot. Have the children connect dot-to-dot pictures. Be sure that the paper is taped to the table so that the children can't shift or turn the paper to complete the task.

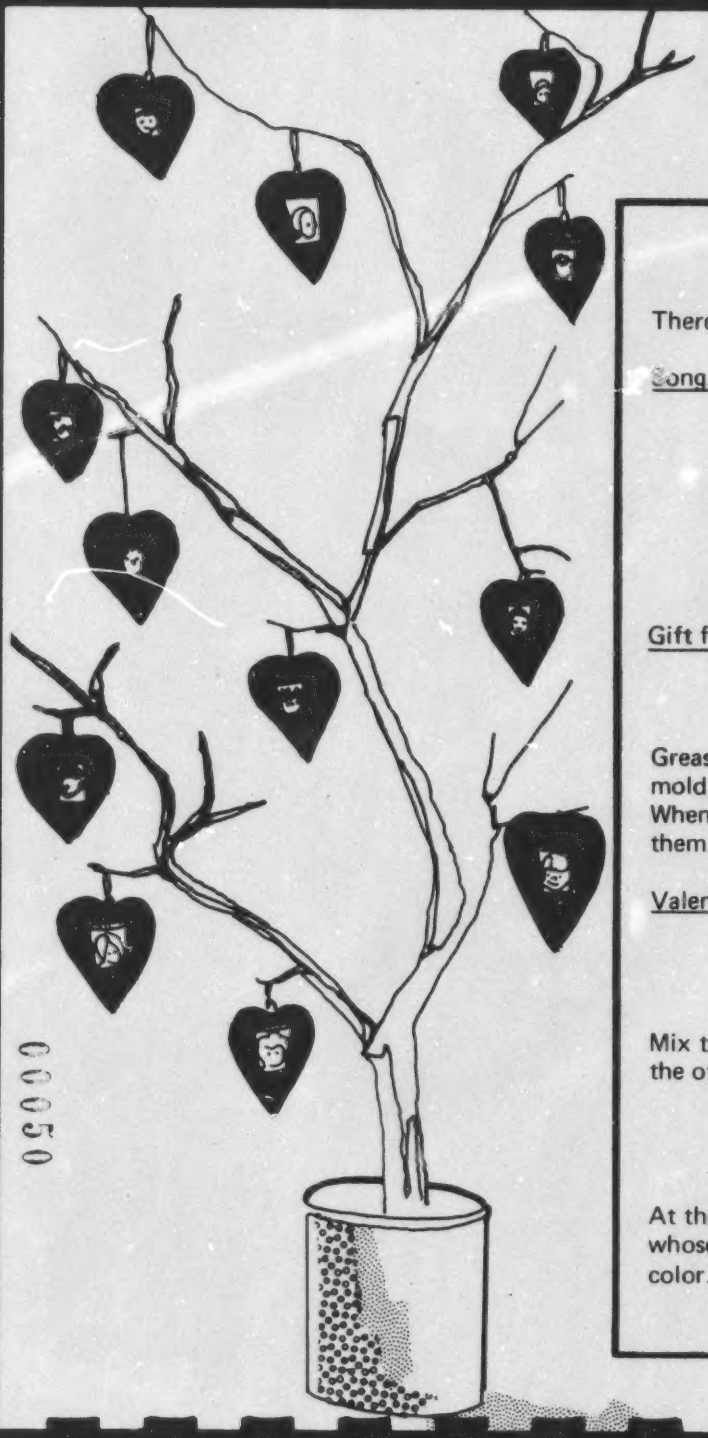
Rhythm. Play rhythm games with emphasis on crossing the hands to slap knees or another's hands.

Floppy Doll. Set a Raggedy Ann doll or floppy clown puppet on your lap. Manipulate the doll so that its hands and legs cross the midline in touching other body parts. Ask the children to imitate the doll's movements. (Right hand to left knee, left hand to right shoulder, right foot to left elbow, etc.)

Body image
Left–right identification
Imitation of movement

JANUARY

00049

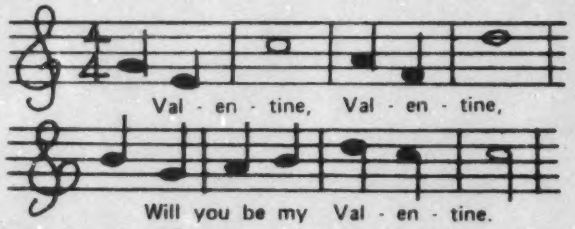


FEBRUARY

VALENTINE'S DAY

There is no better time for building self-concepts than Valentine's Day.

Song.



Gift for Parents. Materials: Small heart-shaped cookie cutter or mold
Picture of each child
Plaster of Paris
Vaseline

Grease the inside of the mold with vaseline. Place a cut-out snapshot of the child face down in the mold; then pour in the plaster of paris. The addition of a paper clip at this time will make a hanger. When the plaster is dry, the children can remove the plaques, paint them with red tempera, and shellac them. Mothers will treasure this gift!

Valentine Ice Cream. Homemade ice cream will be the hit of the party.

Materials: Crank style freezer, rock salt, ice
1½ cans Eagle brand milk
3 bottles cherry soda pop

Mix the ingredients together and prepare the freezer. As each child takes a turn cranking the handle, the other children chant:

Come, ice cream, come.
Come, ice cream, come.
_____'s at the store,
Waiting for some more.

At the end of the chant, the child turning the handle knows that his turn is over and the next child whose name was mentioned in the chant takes over. The finished product is delicious and pink in color.

Purpose: Fun
Gross motor skills

00050

CREATIVE DRAMATIZATION

The free-form approach to creative dramatics seldom works with preschoolers, so plan carefully and provide a motivating theme. It's a good idea to begin with pantomime requiring only simple movements and as the children become less self-conscious, let them express themselves through the role playing and the acting out of past experiences. The sky is the limit for motivating ideas.

Let the children pretend to be:

- marching in a parade,
- climbing up a mountain,
- sliding on the ice,
- different animals crawling, hopping, galloping and jumping,
- birds flying,
- snowflakes, leaves, or rain falling,
- a man sawing, hammering, digging,
- mother baking a cake,
- giving a dog a bath,
- taking bad tasting medicine.

Then suggest they use their voices and pretend to be:

- a dog barking at the mailman
- a train blowing its whistle,
- a car honking its horn,
- a mother scolding her child.

A sequence of activities may be suggested at the next level. For example, let the children pretend to be getting up in the morning. First they get out of bed, then brush their teeth, get dressed, and eat breakfast.

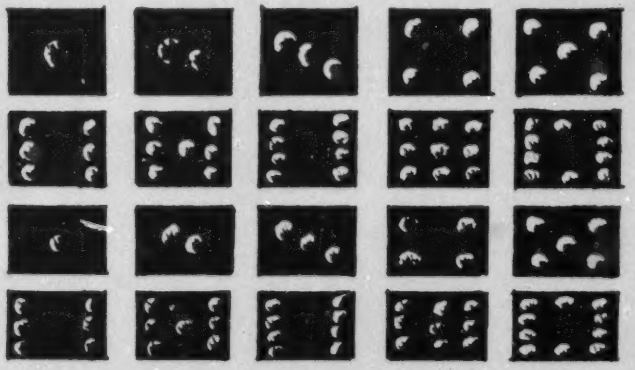
The really creative dramatic play will most likely take place spontaneously in the block corner or housekeeping unit between two children.

Purpose:
- Creative expression
- Imagery

POM-POM MATCH

A child's number concepts begin with one-to-one correspondence and progress to one-to-one comparison (two is more than one). By manipulating objects and visualizing number concepts, the child will discover by himself the principle involved.

Cards to Cards. Materials: 2 sets of 1-10 pom-pom cards.



Glue brightly colored chenille balls on heavy 3"x5" cards domino style. Let the child practice matching the cards 1-5 and place them in order. When he can do that easily, give him the full sets of ten.

Cards to Pegs. Materials: 1 set of pom-pom cards
Box of colored pegs or markers

Have the child put the cards in order and match a corresponding number of pegs to each card.

When the child has mastered the numerical ordering of numbers up to ten, he is ready to express the numbers numerically.

Individual activity

Purpose:
- Visual discrimination
- Number concepts

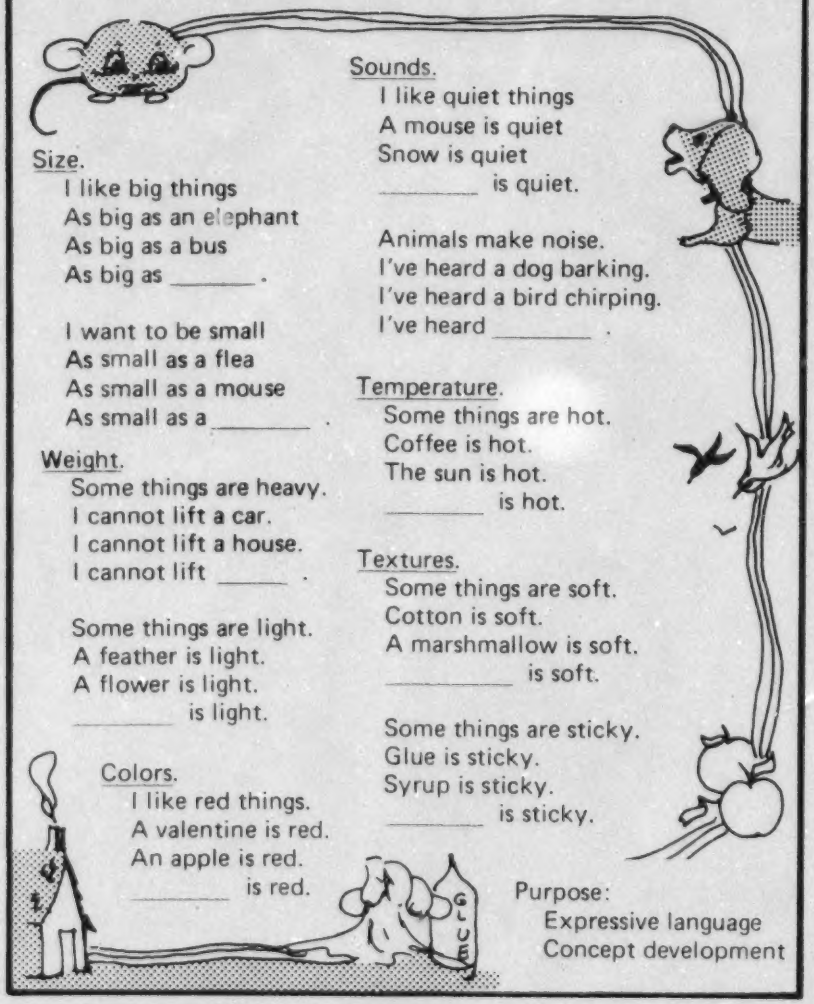
FEBRUARY

00051

FEBRUARY

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Young children need guidance in learning how to express the sensory impressions they receive. To stimulate creative expression, focus the children's attention on one vivid impression at a time. Present a starter sentence and a couple of examples. Let them add their own ideas.



Size.
I like big things
As big as an elephant
As big as a bus
As big as _____ .

I want to be small
As small as a flea
As small as a mouse
As small as a _____ .

Weight.
Some things are heavy.
I cannot lift a car.
I cannot lift a house.
I cannot lift _____ .

Some things are light.
A feather is light.
A flower is light.
_____ is light.

Colors.
I like red things.
A valentine is red.
An apple is red.
_____ is red.

Sounds.
I like quiet things
A mouse is quiet
Snow is quiet
_____ is quiet.

Animals make noise.
I've heard a dog barking.
I've heard a bird chirping.
I've heard _____ .

Temperature.
Some things are hot.
Coffee is hot.
The sun is hot.
_____ is hot.

Textures.
Some things are soft.
Cotton is soft.
A marshmallow is soft.
_____ is soft.

Some things are sticky.
Glue is sticky.
Syrup is sticky.
_____ is sticky.

Purpose:
Expressive language
Concept development

SNIFF, SNIFF!

Multi-sensory training encourages children to use all five senses in real life experiences as they explore and learn about their world. The sense of smell is an important source of information.

Materials: Five edibles with distinctive odors such as vanilla, cloves, tea, coffee, orange, banana, vinegar, sliced onion, hot dog, popcorn, peanut butter.

Have the children smell each item. Discuss its name and how it is prepared or used. Have the child close his eyes and smell one item. See if he can point to the correct item. Have the children take turns.

Variation. Try it with inedible items such as paint, wood shavings, paste, perfume, soap, toothpaste, freshly cut grass, and a flower.

Poem. I Have A Nose

It's really great
I have a nose!
It smells so many things;
Fresh baked bread and cinnamon rolls,
And soap and new mown hay,
And paste and paint
And orange skins
And pretty ocean shells.
It's really great
I have a nose
So I can smell the smells.

Small group activity

Purpose:
Olfactory discrimination

000352

FARM ANIMALS

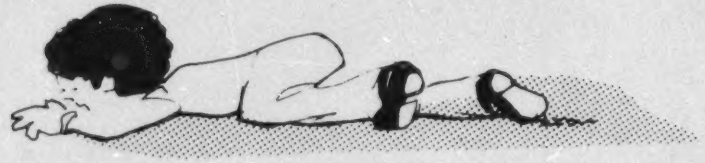
Learning activities should be fun for the children. There is always a special fascination in pretending to be animals.

Animal partners. Materials: Two matching sets of 10 small plastic farm animals--pigs, horses, cows, ducks, cats, dogs, turkeys, sheep, chickens, and geese.

Give each child an animal to hide in his hand or in his pocket. At a given signal the children begin making the sound of their animal. When two children think they have found their matching animal, they reveal their toy animal to each other.

Purpose:
Auditory discrimination

Animal Walks. The preschooler is just learning to motor plan purposeful whole body movement and beginning to integrate the information he receives. Before he can go on to perform complex motor tasks, he must master a certain amount of basic motor planning.



Have the children:

Roll across the floor and then roll back again
Pretend to be inchworms and creep.
Pretend to be seals and waddle.
Pretend to be rabbits and hop.
Pretend to be bears and walk straight legged on all fours.
Pretend to be elephants and walk slowly swaying their trunk arms.

Dramatize other animal movements: scurry, swoop, stalk, pounce, gallop, trot, sprint, fly.

00053

FARM ANIMALS

What am I? Pin a picture of a farm animal on the back of each child. Help each child in turn to identify his animal by having him ask the class, "Do I have feathers? Do I have four legs? Do I have a tail?" etc.

Animal products. Display products from animals.

Chicken and eggs.
Sheep and woolen cloth.
Cows and milk, leather.
Birds and feathers, etc.
Hogs and ham, bacon.

Action Song. To the tune of "Skip to my Lou."

Cow's in the pasture, moo, moo, moo.
Cow's in the pasture, moo, moo, moo.
Cow's in the pasture, moo, moo, moo.
That's what a (cow) likes to do.

Flies in the sugar bowl, shoo, shoo, shoo.....

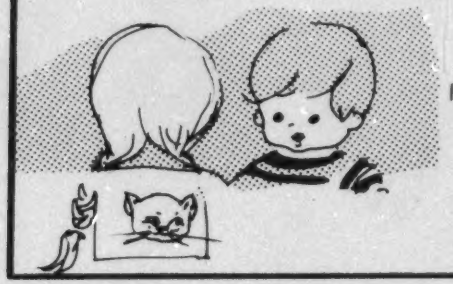
Cat's in the buttermilk, mew, mew, mew.....

Mice in the breadbox, chew, chew, chew.....

Birds in the bushes, coo, coo, coo.....

Pigs in the parlor, oink, oink, oink.....

Rooster's on the fencepost, cock-a-doodle-do.....



Purpose:
Gross motor control
Imitation of movement
Concept development
Language development

FEBRUARY

GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT

Bead Stringing. Let the children string necklaces of Cheerios or Fruit Loops.

Play Dough. The children will enjoy making their own dough, rolling it, patting it, and eating it, too.

Materials: 1 jar of smooth peanut butter
½ box of Rice Krispies
½ box of dry powdered milk
Honey as needed for consistency
M & M's or raisins for decoration

Pudding Paint. Materials: Instant pudding
Finger paint paper

Any flavor of instant pudding will do. Chocolate tends to be a little messy and hard to get off clothes, so vanilla is suggested for dark paper. With a little yellow or red food coloring added, it shows up well on white paper.

The pudding is slippery and feels so nice. It doesn't crack after it dries, smells yummy, and it tastes finger licking good!

Orange Balls. Materials: 1 small can concentrated (thawed) orange juice
1 16 oz. box powdered sugar
1 stick of melted butter
1 14 oz. package crushed vanilla wafers
1 package flaked coconut

Let the children take turns crushing the wafers. Then mix the orange juice, sugar, butter and wafers. The children will form the dough into balls and roll them in flaked coconut.

66054

GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT

Vegetable Stew or Soup. Have the children scrub the potatoes, carrots, celery, onions, and other vegetables required in your favorite stew or soup recipe. Even if the recipe doesn't call for it, have some peas for the children to shell. Discuss the names of the various vegetables, their color, shape, odor and taste. Discuss whether the vegetable grows above the ground or below. Point out the vertical stripes on the ribs of celery and the concentric circles of the cut onion.

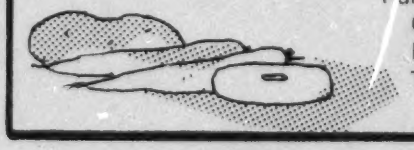
Butter. Many eager hands will make the task of churning heavy cream into butter a delightful one.

Put ½ pint cream in a bowl. Each child gets a turn with the the rotary egg beater. It only takes a few minutes. Add a little salt and a little yellow food coloring. Let all the children taste the buttermilk and the butter. The children may also shake the the cream and a wooden clothespin in a mason jar. This method takes a little longer so have the children take turns shaking to the chant, "One-two-three-four-five" and then pass it on to their neighbor. The lucky child is the one who is shaking when the cream turns into butter.

Doughnuts. Materials: 2 cans refrigerated instant biscuit dough
Bottle caps

Give each child a round of biscuit dough and a bottle cap for a cutter to make his doughnut.

Fry the "holes" and the ring of dough in about 2" of hot fat. Let each child decide whether he wants to eat it that way or make a sugar or cinnamon doughnut out of it. Put powdered sugar in one paper bag and a mixture of granulated sugar and cinnamon in another. Let him drop in his doughnut and shake vigorously.

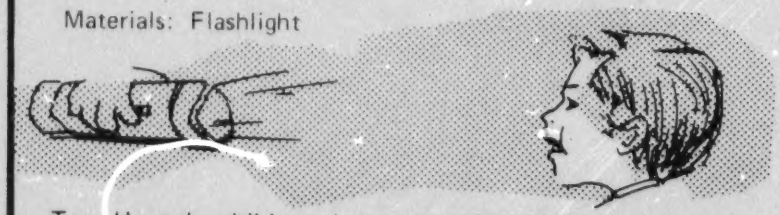


Purpose:
Gustatory awareness
Fine motor control
Tactile awareness

FLASHLIGHT FUN

Visual tracking is involved in following a moving object. Smooth and accurate eye movements are needed to shift the gaze from one place to another and across a line of print.

Materials: Flashlight



Tag. Have the children play a game of flashlight tag in a darkened room. One child is selected to be "it". Another is given a flashlight. As the children walk slowly around the room the child with the flashlight must catch the "it" child with the flashlight beam. He takes the flashlight and another child becomes "it".

Bodyparts. Shine the flashlight on a part of a child's body. Have him touch and name the body part. Let the children take turns being "teacher" with the flashlight.

Variation. Tape pieces of colored cellophane paper to cardboard ribbon tubes. Slip the color form over the flashlight to make fascinating color beams of light.

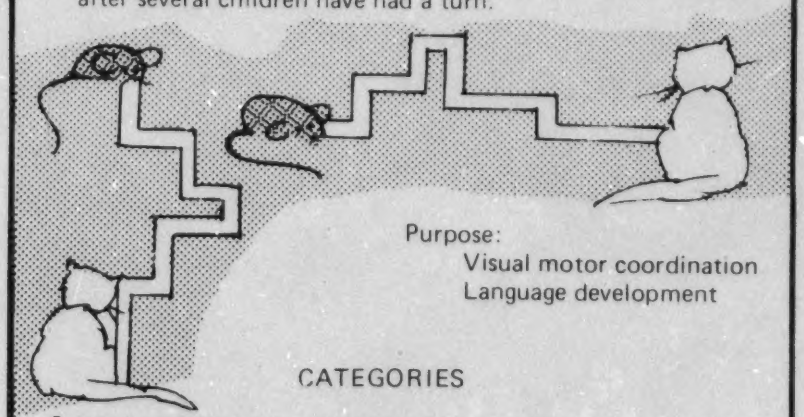
Purpose:
Visual motor coordination
Body image

Lines. Put a piece of bright tape 4-5 feet long on the wall horizontally. Have the children take turns trying to move the beam of light left to right along the tape line. Let them try it vertically, too, from top to bottom.

Shapes. Let the children take turns manipulating the flashlight around a circle drawn on a blackboard, then shine the beam in the center of the circle, under, over and beside the circle. Then have them try it with a triangle and a square. Let the other children follow the light beam with a finger.

FLASHLIGHT FUN

Mazes. Draw a maze on the blackboard with a motivating picture at each end. Have the children take turns trying to keep the beam within the lines. The mazes may be rotated after several children have had a turn.



Purpose:
Visual motor coordination
Language development

CATEGORIES

Sorting experiences lay a groundwork for classification. Children must learn to see similarities and differences and recognize when the differences are important. The ability to abstract a common property must be established before the child can classify.

Materials: Mounted pictures.

Have the children sort the pictures by category, such as animals, toys, food, furniture, vehicles, clothing, etc.

To increase the level of difficulty, have the children sub-divide the categories even further.

Food: Foods we eat in the morning, evening.
Fruits, vegetables, meat.
Foods we cook, eat raw.

Animals: Live in water, fly, crawl.
Circus, zoo, farm, pets.

Individual activity

Purpose: Concept development
Classification
Language development

FEBRUARY

00055

FEBRUARY

CREATIVE MUSIC

Parents and other adults encourage the artistic endeavors of young children. Coloring with crayons, cutting and pasting, are all quiet activities, but experimenting with fascinating sounds is often discouraged.

Sounds. Give each child a spoon. Let him make a variety of sounds by tapping pots and pans, radiators, tabletops, door knobs, pitchers, and drinking glasses filled with varying amounts of water.

Bring a violin or guitar to class and let the children pluck the strings.

Let the children make the loud sound of a fire engine siren and the quiet sound of wind blowing.

Movement. After the children have experimented with sound, suggest creative movement to music. Have them tip-toe to quiet music, and stomp to fast music. Then play sad music, angry music, etc., and let the children interpret it as they wish.

Story time. Have several musical instruments available so that the children can select the ones they want to use as background music for short fairy tales or nursery rhymes. For example, if you tell a fairy tale, the child might select bells as background for the fairy and a gong for the dragon.

Music. Sing a simple tune with the children such as "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush." In between each verse, select a child to create the music with his choice of instrument. Praise the children who come up with a new rhythm or pattern of music.

Purpose:
Auditory discrimination
Rhythm

WHEELS

Wheels are a constant source of fascination in early childhood.

Counting. Discuss the different means of transportation; which have wheels and which do not. Have pictures of a bicycle, motorcycle, tricycle, truck, train, airplane, and a car. Let the children count the wheels. Don't forget the steering wheels!

Science. Fill a big box with blocks or other heavy objects. Ask the children to push it across the room. Then put roller skates under the box and ask the children to push it back again. Ask "Which way is the box easier to move? Why?"

Arrange a display of objects on the science table that have "wheels" to help us: toy cars, a watch, an egg beater, crank-type flour sifter, old alarm clock, etc.

Dramatization. Have the children pretend to be a train. Ask them to say "Choo, choo, choo, choo," rhythmically. Then have them say it as they extend the left and right arm alternately. Have them try it extending both arms at the same time.

Story time. Read Wonderful Wheels by Feinie Ziner.

Purpose:
Number concepts
Gross motor control

HOT AND COLD

Show how temperature changes food. Pop popcorn, melt butter, and cook an egg. Chill the melted butter, and make jello. Observe the chilled foods an hour after refrigeration.

Purpose:
Science concepts

000356

TOUCH AND GO

Body awareness and body image are developed through games in which the child is made to move and control parts of his body.

Touching Teacher. Have the children close their eyes. Touch one child with a piece of paper and then ask, "Where did I touch you?" He may point to the spot or respond verbally "under the chin, on my elbow, etc." The children may take turns playing "Touching Teacher." To vary the game, touch with a finger, a paper clip, a feather, a pencil eraser, a piece of yarn. The child can try to guess what was used to touch him.

Touch Me. Ask the children to touch various parts of their face and body as they are named. Include more difficult body words such as wrist, ankle, waist, knee, forehead, shoulder, etc., as the children progress in ability.

Ask them to touch their left ear with their right hand by reaching over their head. Demonstrate the action and see if the children can imitate the movement.

Have them clasp their fingers together and reach out in front with their arms extended straight.

Statues. Have the children dance around in a circle. When you clap your hands, they must freeze in whatever position they are in at the moment. (This is difficult for preschoolers to do.)

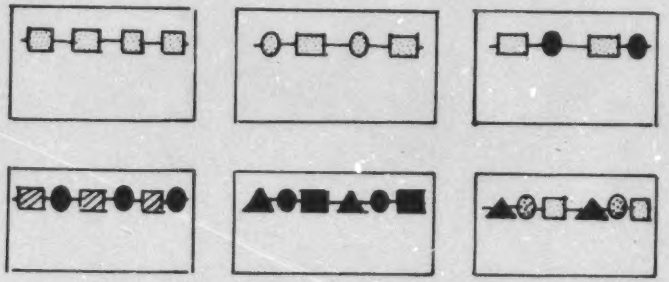
Record. The record "Dance-A-Story about Flappy and Floppy" comes with a delightfully illustrated 48-page story book.

Purpose:
- Body image
- Imitation of movement
- Impulse control

BEADS

Picking up buttons, beads, and other small objects with thumb and forefinger helps to develop fine motor control and readies the child for holding a pencil. Threading beads develops eye-hand coordination.

Materials:
- Large wooden beads, assorted shapes and colors
- Laces or string with taped ends
- Bead pattern cards



Have the child match the beads to the pattern card by placing the same color and shaped bead on the card progressing from left to right.

The child is to string the beads following the pattern. The designs should form a repeated pattern and the cards progress from simple to complex levels of perceptual difficulty.

When the child becomes adept at continuing a repeating pattern, reduce the size of the beads.

Encourage the child to create his own design with a repetitive pattern.

If the task is frustrating to the child because of difficulty in threading, give him empty thread spools or regatoni (huge macaroni) to string.

Individual activity.

Purpose:
- Visual motor coordination
- Fine motor control

00057

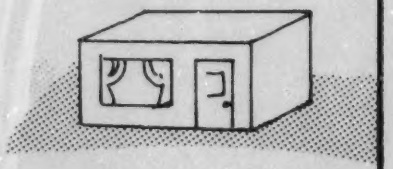
FEBRUARY

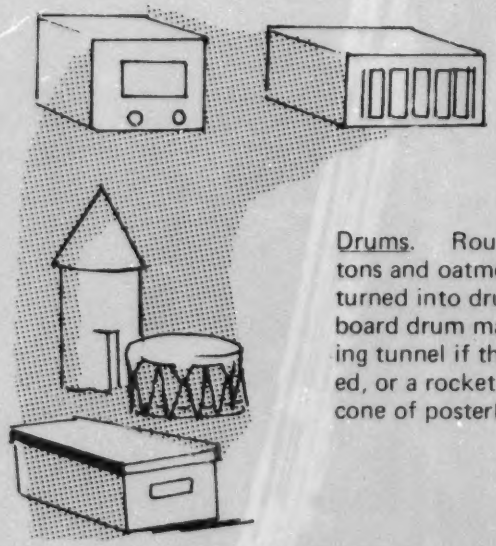
FEBRUARY

BOXES

A child's imagination may be stimulated by a box; any size or shape will do.

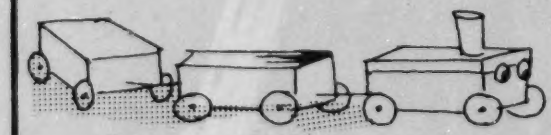
Cartons. Large appliance boxes may be turned into a puppet theater, a store, a cave, a TV set, a play house, or a cage for wild animals.





Drums. Round ice cream cartons and oatmeal boxes may be turned into drums. A tall fiberboard drum makes a fine crawling tunnel if the bottom is removed, or a rocket to the moon if a cone of posterboard is added.

Shoeboxes. Shoeboxes may be made into "feelie" boxes, peep shows, or surprise boxes. The children can make a train from shoeboxes by simply adding plastic lids with paper fasteners for wheels and threading a string through the boxes.



PRESIDENTS' BIRTHDAY PARTY

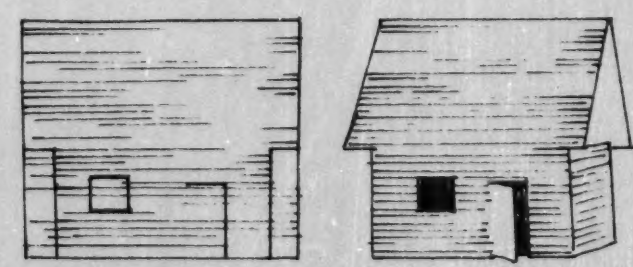
By making this a special festive day, the children will begin to develop a pride in the heritage of our country.

Flags. Have each child make a flag; pasting or coloring the stripes and stars. Teach the children to salute the flag with right hand over heart and to recite:

We love our flag,
Our beautiful flag,
The red, the white and blue.

Cherry Tree. Have the children draw a picture of a tree and color it green. Paste red dots (made with a large paper punch) on their cherry tree.

Log Cabin. Materials: 6" x 9" piece of brown corrugated paper.



The children can make realistic three-dimensional log cabins from corrugated paper by folding it in half crosswise (with the corrugated side out). Cut in one inch or more on each side, front and back. Fold the cardboard in and staple the one-inch pieces together. These are the sides of the cabin. Cut a door and a window.

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PRESIDENTS' BIRTHDAY PARTY

Hats. Let the children choose whether they want to make tall stove-pipe hats for President Lincoln or tri-cornered hats for President Washington.

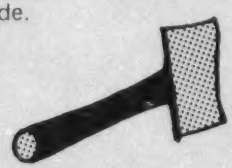
Lincoln's hat: A 12" x 18" sheet of black construction paper is used for the brim, and a 9" x 12" black sheet is rolled and taped to the top of the hat.

Washington's hat: Fold an 18" x 24" piece of construction paper in half (18" x 12"). With folded edge at the top fold each top corner in to the center. The fold up a 3" brim on both sides.

Marching. Have a parade. Let the children march to "Yankee Doodle" wearing the hats and waving the flags.

When Washington was a little boy,
A hatchet was his favorite toy.
With his hatchet he learned as a youth,
It is always best to tell the truth.

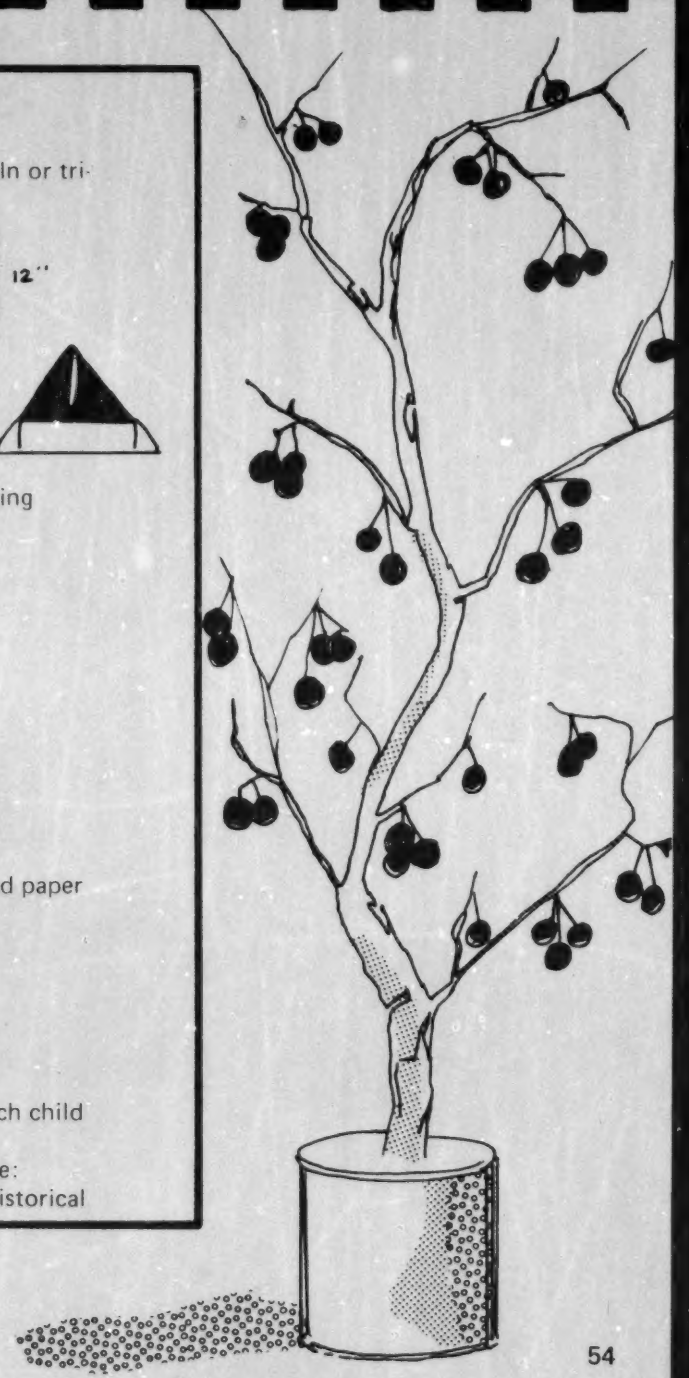
Hatchets. Make hatchets by rolling a strip of construction paper for a handle and adding a folded paper blade.



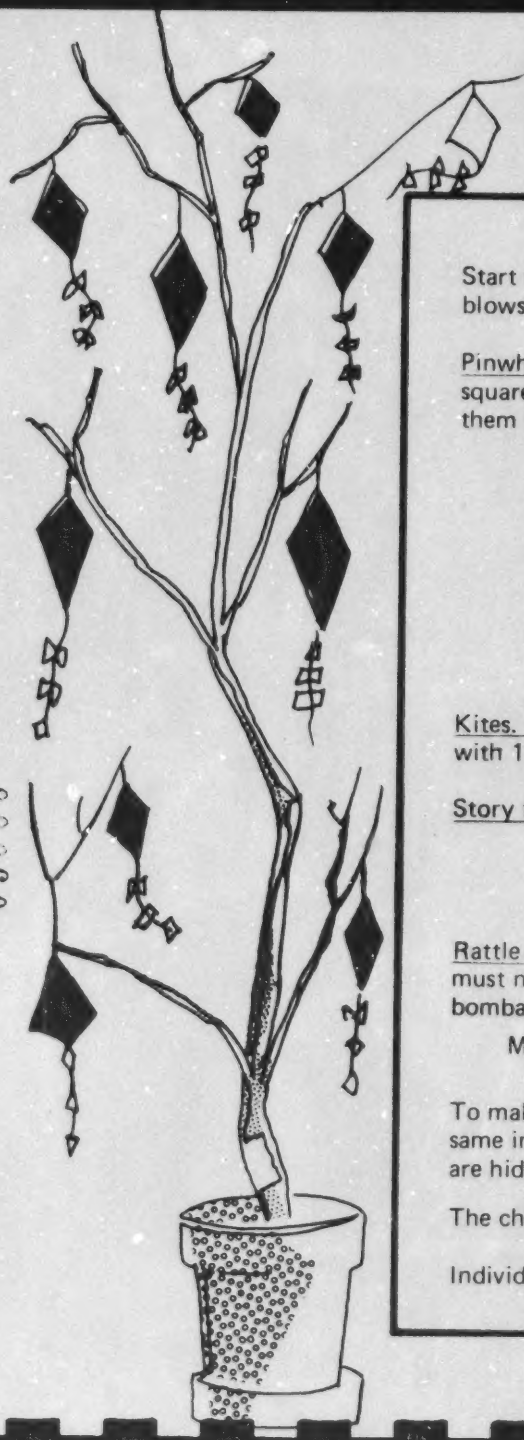
Tell the cherry tree story.
Its validity is questionable, but the children love to hear it.

President's Birthday Cake. Make a white sheet cake with pink frosting. Score the cake and let each child put a cherry and a red candle in one of the squares. Serve with the candles lighted.

Purpose:
Historical



FEBRUARY



MARCH

THE WIND

Start the children off with the statement, "I've seen what the wind blows. The wind blows grass, the wind blows curtains," etc. Ask the children to think of as many things as they can that the wind blows.

Pinwheels. On a fine windy day, have the children make pinwheels. Cut diagonal lines from the corners of a square to within an inch of the center. Fold a point of each triangle into the center and thumbtack through them to an eraser on top of a pencil.

Kites. Have the children make construction paper kites, then string two rectangles of colored paper alternately with 1" lengths of drinking straws to keep them apart to make a tail.

Story time. Read the story of Gilberto and the Wind by Marie Hall Ets.

Purpose:
Science concepts

AUDITORY PERCEPTION

Rattle and Shake. Our children are growing up in a noisy world where listening skills are important. They must not only learn to discriminate sounds but also learn to filter out the unimportant background sounds that bombard them.

Materials: 10 small identical cans with lids
Rice, sand, buttons, paper clips, marbles, nails, rubber bands, beans, pebbles, etc.

To make a set of five pairs of sound cylinders, half fill each pair of containers with an equal quantity of the same ingredient. Cover the cans and lids with contact paper so that they cannot be opened and the ingredients are hidden.

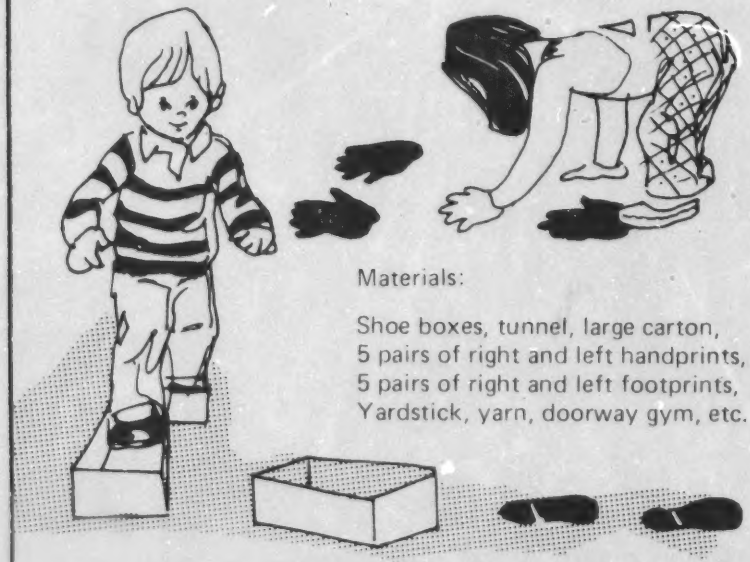
The child shakes and rattles until he can pair off the ones that make the same sound.

Individual activity

Purpose:
Auditory discrimination

RAINY DAY OBSTACLE COURSE

A child must learn full control of his body as he moves from place to place in order to master ever more complex challenges in the development process. There's a lot of learning value in an obstacle course and even though the weather doesn't permit going outside, the children can be put through the paces.



Materials:

Shoe boxes, tunnel, large carton,
5 pairs of right and left handprints,
5 pairs of right and left footprints,
Yardstick, yarn, doorway gym, etc.

Create your own obstacle course in the classroom from any materials that are available. For example, have the children place their hands on the matching handprints, then have them crawl through the tunnel on their hands and knees, step in the shoeboxes, crawl backward feet first through a carton with the ends removed, step over a yardstick resting on the rungs of two chairs, swing on the doorway gym, walk on the matching footprints, straddle a yarn path, etc. Discuss the course using prepositions "through the tunnel," "under the table," "in the box," "over the yardstick," etc.

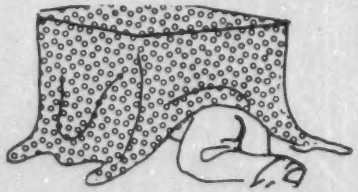
C0061

RAINY DAY OBSTACLE COURSE

An easily stored collapsible tunnel may be made by sewing fabbric into a tube large enough in circumference to just fit a hula hoop. Slip three hoops into the tube, one at each end and one in the center. Leave the ends open and you have a great tunnel!

A short tunnel can be made from a plastic trash can with the bottom cut out.

A blanket draped over an upright table or draped over a table resting on its side may also be used.

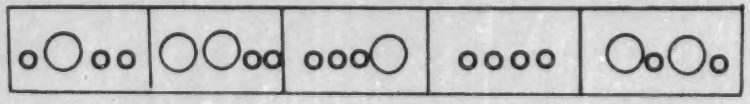


Purpose:
- Body image
- Spatial relationships
- Gross motor control
- Language development

AUDITORY PERCEPTION

This auditory experience will improve the child's ability to recognize differences in sound intensity.

Loud and Soft. Prepare cards with big and little circles on them. Tell the children that the large circle means a loud clap and the little circle means a soft clap. Demonstrate with one card. Then give each child a card and help him clap the pattern.



The next time you clap a pattern and the child who thinks he has that card stands up.

Purpose:
- Left–right progression
- Auditory discrimination

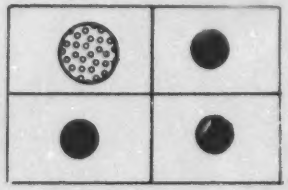
MARCH

IT DOESN'T BELONG!

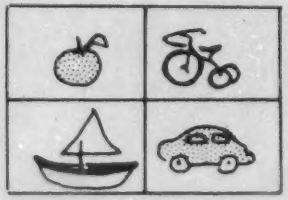
Teachers must prepare and provide materials and experiences that will give children varied experiences in visual perception and in reasoning.

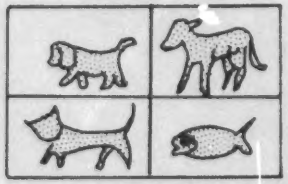
Place pictures of three identical small items and a large similar item on one card. Make several sets of cards with one odd color, shape, or size and vary the position of the "different" item. Have the child put a marker on the one that doesn't belong.

It's more difficult to select the one that doesn't belong based on use.



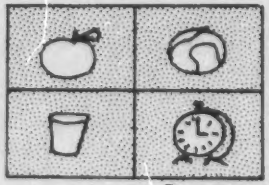
Materials: Picture cards.





Or shapes in objects.

Or type.



Purpose:
Visual discrimination
Concept development

Individual activity

CREATIVE THINKING

The thinking skills of children may be developed by giving them many opportunities to think. If children are only asked simple questions they will only respond with simple answers in in return! There are four basic kinds of thinking: recall is the most primitive (What color is this?), next higher on the developmental scale is analytic thinking (Which straw is the longest?), then comes creative thinking that requires the child to come up with a new or unknown solution to a problem (What would you do if .....?). The highest level is evaluative thinking which requires that a judgment be based on past experience.

The teacher poses a problem situation that may have several possible solutions.

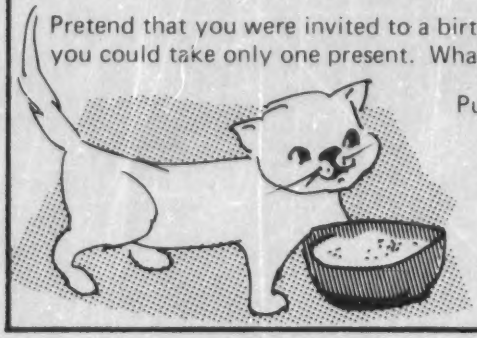
Examples: Pretend that you are Santa Clause and you have lost all the presents you were going to deliver. What would you do?

Pretend that you found a strange cat on your front porch. The cat stayed there all night long. It looked hungry and lost. What would you do?

Pretend that you and a friend were playing at the corner of your street and you saw smoke coming out of the house across the street. What would you do?

Pretend that your Grandmother was coming for a visit. How could you help your mother get ready?

Pretend that you were invited to a birthday party for twins and you could take only one present. What would you bring?



Purpose:
Creative thinking
Imagination
Expressive language

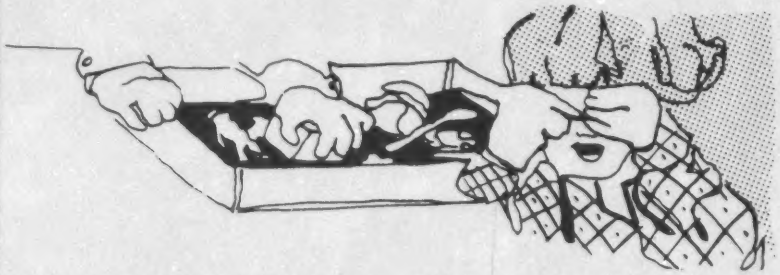
00062

BEFORE AND AFTER

A child must experience a concept many times in many situations before he understands it. Concepts cannot be taught, but will be discovered by the child if he is given the opportunity.

Materials: 4 or more different objects

Place the objects on a tray. Ask the children to name them and to take a good look at them. Have the children close their eyes or shield the objects from view and remove one item to a shoe box. Then ask, "What was here before that is not here now?" As the children catch on, make the game harder by adding more objects.



Arrange three children in a row. After the other children have seen the order, ask one child to hide his eyes. The three children "scramble." The "it" child tries to rearrange the children as they were before. As competence increases, involve four and then five children in the row.

A variation of this game may be played by displaying a series of objects in a row. Out of sight of the children, an object may be added, or switched in position. The child is asked to arrange the object and gradually increase the number. The level of difficulty may also be increased by moving more than one object or not changing any. This may also be played using pictures of objects.

Another variation may be played by placing a number of objects on a tray. After the children have had a chance to study the tray, cover the items with a cloth and see how many items they can name.

BEFORE AND AFTER

Materials: Sets of Before and After cards

Mixing bowl with batter	a cake
a little tree	a tall tree
an apple	a slice of apple pie
a baby	a child
a girl	a woman
a boy	a man
a puppy	a dog
a ball of yarn	a sweater
a tomato	a bottle of ketchup
a potato	french fries
a cow	a steak

Spread the set of "after" cards on the floor where all the children can see them. Select a card from the "before" set and ask a child to find the "after" picture that goes with it. Give each child a chance to match a card and to discuss why the cards go together.

Purpose:
- Concept development
- Visual memory
- Time sequence

RAGDOLL

Action Game.

Let's play ragdoll, don't make a sound!
Fling your arms and your body around.
Fling your hands
Fling your feet,
Let your head go free.
Be the raggediest doll you ever did see.

Purpose:
- Body image

MARCH

FEELIES

A "Feelie" Bag. Tactual recognition of objects is dependent on former experience in looking at the object, and touching and manipulating it. When the child visualizes with his finger tips, he builds visual memory of texture, size and form. Through repeated sensory stimulation, the children will find it easier to form mental images.

Materials: 20 small objects including a few pairs of identical objects such as comb, toothbrush, penny, doll, apple, pencil, ball, feather, key, scissor, etc.

Select a few pairs of dissimilar objects such as toothbrushes, apples, and scissors. Place one set on the table and the other in the bag. Ask the child to find the mate to an object on the table by feeling in the bag.

Make the game more difficult by increasing the number of objects and having them more alike in shape and texture (a ball and an apple, a bar of soap, and a rectangular wooden block, a piece of toast, and a dry sponge.)

The level of difficulty may be increased still further by having a child reach into the bag filled with objects he has not seen. The child must try to name the object he is touching before he takes it from the bag.

An even more advanced form of this game may be played by having a child or the teacher describe the properties of the object he is touching. The other children must try to name it from the description. The use of the object and what it is made from may be included in the discussion.

C0064

FEELIES

A "Feelie" Box.

Materials: A fairly small carton with one end open and a 4" circle cut in both sides.

Place the box so that the open end is facing the class and the holes are on either side. This way the class can see what the child is feeling. The children get a whole new idea of size, shape, and the differences of things in this game. Use familiar objects such as a ball, pencil, twig, drinking glass, light bulb, eraser, spoon, fork, chalk, plate, ribbon, shoelace, paper clip, stone, wood, cloth, nail, sponge, milk carton, carrot, etc.

Purpose:
Tactile discrimination
Imagery
Visual memory

BEADS

Mock Turquoise Jewelry. Materials: ½ cup cornstarch
1 cup baking soda
5 oz. water

Place the ingredients in a saucepan, stir constantly over low heat until the mixture has the consistency of putty. Transfer dough to a bowl, cover with a damp cloth and let cool. Knead the dough like bread and store in a covered bowl.

Have the children mold little balls and paint them turquoise blue. Before they dry, make a hole for stringing in each bead with a toothpick. Differences in size of the beads won't matter, the child can sequence them when he strings the necklace.

The dough may be stored for a few days if wrapped tightly in plastic wrap.

Purpose:
Fine motor control

SCRAMBLED SHAPES AND COLORS

Children learn through repetition which reinforces the learning. They will have mastered a concept when they can deal with it in many different ways.

Circle Game.

Materials: Large paper shapes of triangles, circles, stars, and squares cut from yellow, red, blue, green, and white construction paper. (A total of 20 different shapes and colors.)

Distribute one of the shapes to each child as they stand in a large circle. Then call out, "All triangles (or circles, stars, or squares) inside the circle."

Vary the calls to teach grouping by color. "All yellows inside the circle."

Increase the difficulty level by asking the two properties (red triangles) to move inside the circle.

Mailman Game.

Materials:
20 large paper shapes as above
20 envelopes

Put one shape in each envelope.

Have the children sit on the floor in a circle. Choose one child to be the mailman. He delivers an envelope to a child who opens it, places the shape on the floor in front of him and names its color and shape. If he fails to name it correctly, he must replace it in the envelope and say, "Wrong house." He will have another turn to correctly identify his shape after the mailman has finished his rounds.

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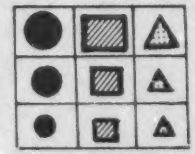
SCRAMBLED SHAPES AND COLORS

Size Places. Materials: Heavy cardboard 9" x 9"
Construction paper

Divide the cardboard into nine 3" squares. Paste a large, middle-sized and small circle, triangle, and square in each of the squares. Cut the squares apart. Let the child play with the pieces and observe whether he puts them in order. If he doesn't know what to do with them, ask him if he can find the big ones, the little ones, the middle sized ones, the circles, the squares, the triangles.



Purpose:
Shape and color recognition

Individual activity

MAZES

The preschool child's mental development permits him many new accomplishments. The habit of thinking problems through will come after the child learns for himself that trial and error is not the easiest way to tackle a problem.

Blocks. Build a block maze on the floor and let the children take turns driving small cars or trucks through it. Have the children discuss which way is the longest and the shortest. Lay a piece of yarn along each path and measure the lengths to confirm their choices.

Masking tape. Put a masking tape maze on the floor and let the children walk their way through it.

Blackboard. Draw a maze on the chalkboard, or better yet, let the children do it and take turns solving it.

Paper. Draw a maze on paper and let the children mark the path through it with crayon.

Purpose:
Planning ahead
Distance judgment

Small group activity

MARCH

PUPPETS

Children feel less self-conscious when expressing themselves with puppets, so, puppet play can raise the child's concept of himself and help stimulate oral language, too.

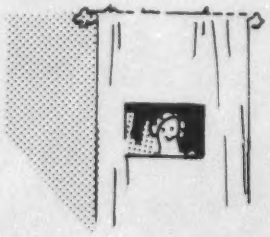
Finger Puppets. Delightful finger puppets can be made by cutting the fingers off old gloves and adding eyes, nose, mouth, and yarn hair.

Sock Puppets. Stuff old socks, to form people or animal puppets. The facial features may be sewn on or put on with Magic Marker.

Mitten Puppets. When one mitten is lost, its partner can become a puppet!

Ball Puppets. Cut a small hole in a small hollow rubber ball. Paint or glue on a face. The children will love to poke their finger in the hole.

Puppet theater. Attach a pair of curtain rod brackets on either side of a doorway. Cut an opening in an old drapery at the proper height from the floor to make a stage. Simply hang the drapery rod and you have an instant puppet theater.



Small group activity

Purpose:

- Language development
- Social development
- Imagination
- Self-concept

TANGLED FUN

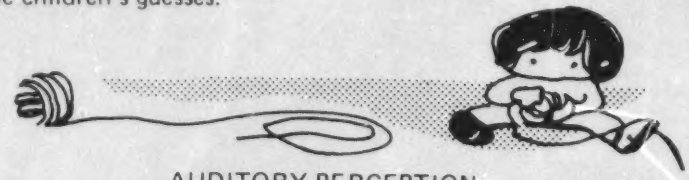
Children as well as kittens like to play with balls of yarn. Many developmental activities using yarn can be introduced into the pre-school room.

Materials: Several balls of brightly colored thick yarn

Let one child unwind a ball of yarn while walking around the room in a random fashion. The other children play "follow the leader" walking on the yarn from one end to the other. Let the children take turns winding the yarn into a ball. (It's great for fine motor skills.)

Play yarn "dodge ball" with two teams sitting Indian fashion opposite each other. The head of one row is given a ball of yarn. As he hits a member of the other team, that person is eliminated. The game continues until there is only one child left. It's even more fun with two balls of yarn.

Unwind one ball of yarn in a fairly straight line on the floor. Unwind another ball of a different color in a zig-zag crooked line. Ask the children to walk both lines and then ask which line is longer. Measure the yarn before rewinding the balls to confirm the children's guesses.



AUDITORY PERCEPTION

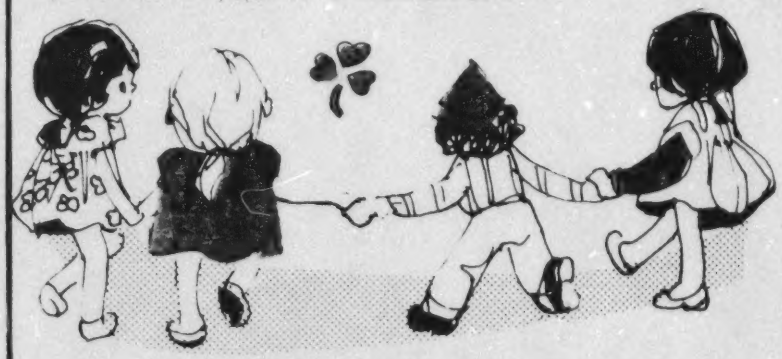
Auditory Memory. Give the children practice in following oral instructions. Start with one simple command at a time such as: Stand up or clap your hands. Increase the instructions to two, three, or even four simple directions given in succession, but keep them brief! The command must be performed in the sequence given.

Another day, tap a pattern on the table or on a drum and have the children repeat the pattern. (1-2-3, 1-2, 2-2, 1-2-1, etc.)

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

Game. Plan a Green Game. Have the children form a circle. Touch one child and he must name something green or point to something in the room that is green. Then that child touches another and says "Green." The second child must name something green. The game continues until all children have had a turn.

Art. Cut out three hearts and a narrow strip from green construction paper for each child. Have the children paste them on paper to form a shamrock.



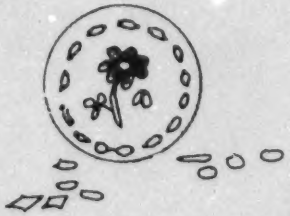
Purpose:
Visual motor coordination

Shades of Green. Show the children a row of green paint samples. Help them describe the colors in words such as light, dark, bright, dull, pale, etc. Some children may be able to put the paint chips in order from lightest to darkest.

Music. Have the children dance an Irish Jig to Irish music.

LACING

Circles. Punch holes around a paper plate for each child. Dip the ends of yarn or string in glue and let dry. The next day, have the children lace in and out the holes. A picture may be pasted in the center of the plate.



Shapes. Cut shapes from construction paper and punch holes around the edge. Have the children lace an overcast stitch around edge.

Boxes. Have the children lace in and out the holes of a plastic berry container.

Purpose:
Fine motor control
Visual motor coordination

MARCH

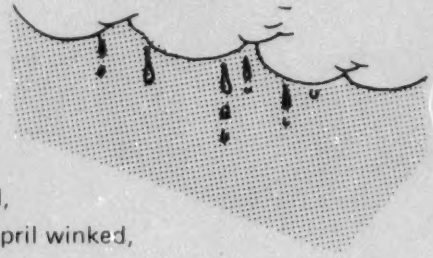
C0067

APRIL

APRIL FOOL

Anything goes on April Fool's Day. Play some harmless tricks on the children in the spirit of April 1.

April rained,
April showered,
April frowned,
April glowered,
April smiled,
April winked,
April fooled,
I think!



Purpose: Fun

MIXING COLORS

Let the children experiment by mixing small dots of paint as the teacher reads this poem. Put the paint in spill-proof squeeze bottles labeled with color squares.

Materials: Red, yellow, and blue tempera paint

Bunny had a paint box,
But it was very small.
He had just red and yellow
And blue, and that was all.

So bunny mixed his colors.
He mixed the red and blue,
And soon he had a purple,
A pretty purple, too.

Then he took the yellow,
And mixed that with the red.
What do you suppose he got?
An orange paint instead.

Bunny liked the mixups,
And his mixups were such fun.
He mixed the blue and yellow,
And got green. Then he was done!

Batik eggs. Materials: Crayons
Large white construction paper egg shapes
Tempera paint

Let the children draw designs with crayon on the white construction paper egg and then paint the egg lightly with thinned pastel tempera paint. The coloring will show through the paint to produce a beautiful batik effect.

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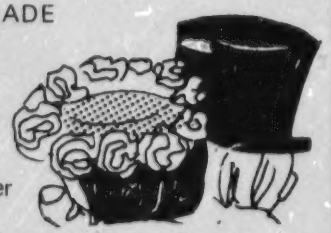
MIXING COLORS

Egg Tempera Eggs Materials: Egg yolks
Powdered tempera
White construction paper egg shapes

Mix equal parts of egg yolk and water. First wet the brush but shake off the excess water. Dip the tip of the brush into the egg yolk mixture, then into a shallow dish of dry tempera. Work the brush until the egg and powder are thoroughly mixed. Brilliant effects may be had by painting one color over another, letting the first color show through. As the coats build up, the painting takes on a glossy enamel look. After the painting is dry, polish to an even gloss by rubbing with a soft cloth.
(This activity is only recommended for the most mature preschoolers, but it may come in handy for the teacher who has a bulletin board or poster to make.)

EASTER PARADE



Materials: Paper plate for each girl
Pastel crepe paper
Black construction paper
Dress-up clothes

Let the girls paste wads of 4" square colored crepe paper on the back of a paper plate, representing flowers on their Easter Bonnets. Tie under the chin with crepe paper streamers.

Have the boys make a high hat.

Have a large assortment of long dresses, old suit jackets, high heels for the girls and big shoes for the boys. Let the parade begin!

Story time. Read Jennie's Hat by Ezra Jack Keats.

Purpose:
Self concept
Social development

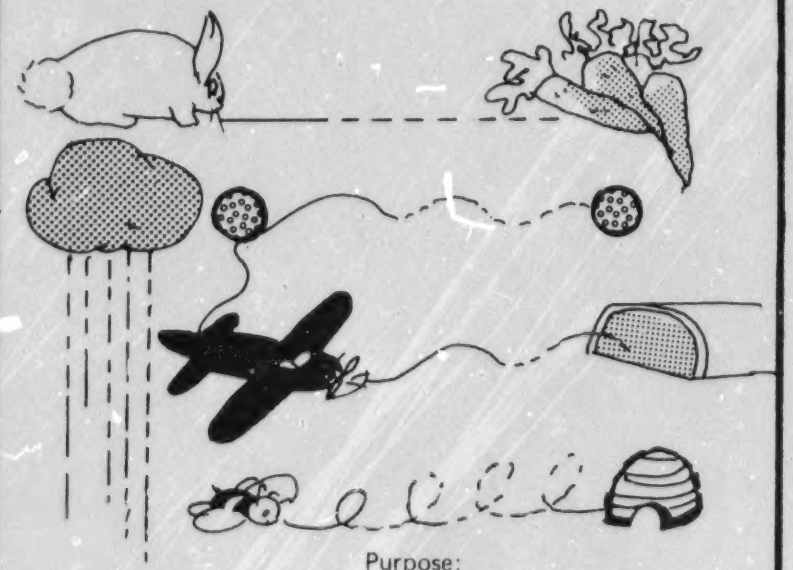
AFTER EASTER

Mosaic Pictures. Crush the leftover shells of dyed Easter eggs into small pieces. Have the children brush glue on a piece of black construction paper and stick the bits of colored egg shell onto it. Sprinkle gold glitter on the finished product before the glue dries, and the picture will have a dramatic mosaic effect.

Purpose:
Creative art
Fine motor control

WRITING READINESS

Dotted lines. Prepare several pictures that include a dotted line for the children to connect.



Purpose:
Visual motor coordination
Left – right progression

APRIL

APRIL

NATURE'S OWN

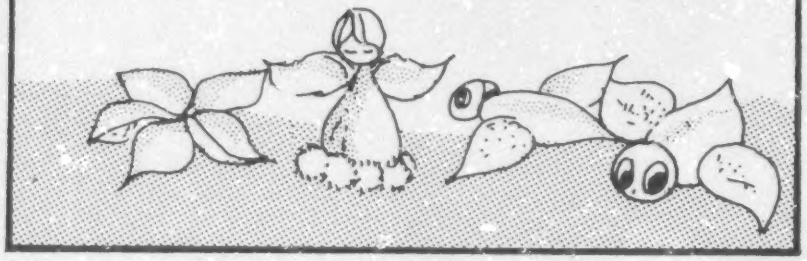
Everyone, including preschoolers, enjoys experimenting with natural materials, finding ways to give them new form.

Rocks. The children can create animals, people and monsters with a little bit of glue, a pair of movable eyes (from the craft store) and some rounded rocks or pebbles.

Shells. Little sea shells can become flower petals and larger ones make scary creatures if movable eyes are added. Tiny sea shells may be arranged in wet plaster of Paris to make interesting plaques.

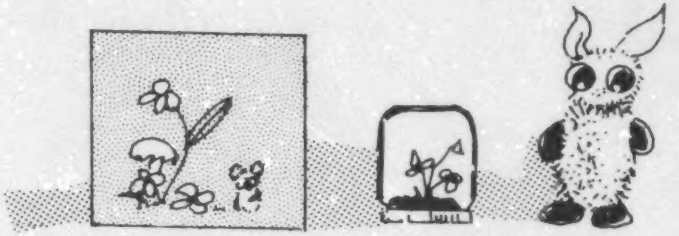
Seeds. Dry beans, lentils, peas, corn, pumpkin, melon, flower, and wild grass seeds offer a lovely array of colors. Have the children draw an outline of what they want to make (help those who can't). Spread glue with a brush within the outline and let the children create.

Milkweed Pods. There are all sorts of interesting possibilities for milkweed pods. Three pods and half a walnut shell make a three-dimensional bird, five make a flower.



NATURE'S OWN

Weeds. Gather dry weeds on a fall walk. A miniature arrangement can be made by putting a piece of floral clay in the inside of a baby food jar lid, arranging the weeds and screwing the jar back on. Some of the weeds may be spray painted to make the arrangement more colorful. Pine cones, feathers, twigs, sand, and other materials should be available to encourage the children's own natural creativity.



Acorns. Have the children put Magic Marker faces on acorns. Loop a thread around the cap and hang on the classroom tree.

Purpose:
Fine motor control
Creative art

AUDITORY PERCEPTION

Have one child sit in a chair with his back to the class. The teacher points to another child who comes up behind the seated child and says, "Who am I?" The child must try to guess whose voice he heard.

Purpose:
Auditory discrimination

HEAVY OR LIGHT

Children need practice with weights before they can learn to make comparisons and develop judgment.

Materials: 4 identical opaque plastic detergent bottles
Sand

Fill the first bottle full of sand, the second three-quarters full, the third half full, and leave the last one empty.

Have the children lift all the bottles one at a time starting with the heaviest. Mix them up and have the child put them in order. Discuss the heaviest, the lightest. More bottles may be added to increase the difficulty level.

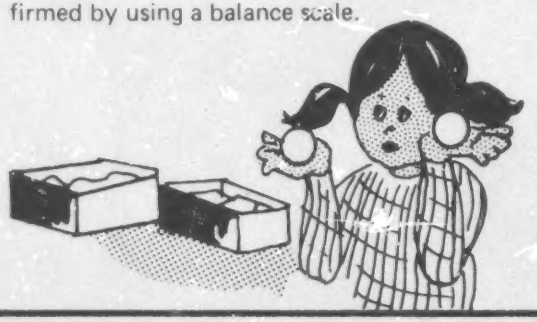
Encourage even finer weight discrimination by using large plastic pill bottles covered with contact paper. Two sets of weight cylinders may be made so that the child can match the ones that feel the same.

The children must realize that size doesn't necessarily determine weight.

Materials: a ping pong ball - a golf ball
a tennis ball - a baseball or styrofoam ball
a sponge - block of wood or metal
Box of feathers - box of sand

Prepare a number of items of similar shape and size that vary in weight.

Let the children guess which is the heaviest and then hold one item in each hand to see if they are right. Guesses can be confirmed by using a balance scale.



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HEAVY OR LIGHT

Make two bean bags that look the same; fill one with beans and one with styrofoam packing filler. Let the child hold the heavy one in one hand and the light weight one in the other, and then try to throw them into a box or onto a chair. Reverse the bean bags next time around.

Individual activities

Purpose:
Weight discrimination

ABSURDITIES

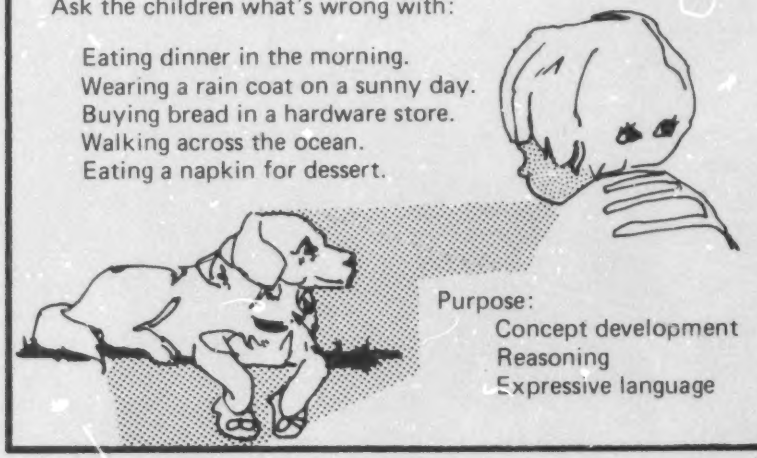
To get along in this world, children must learn that everything they see and hear is not really the way it is. These activities will also help to develop a sense of humor in the children.

Materials: Set of pictures with something wrong. Magazine advertisements are a good source of pictures though you can make your own. Be creative!

Examples: Elephant, smaller than a dog
Sparkplug in a bird cage
Raw egg in an orange peel
Man with eyes in the back of his head
Rabbit wearing a bib

Ask the children what's wrong with:

Eating dinner in the morning.
Wearing a rain coat on a sunny day.
Buying bread in a hardware store.
Walking across the ocean.
Eating a napkin for dessert.



Purpose:
Concept development
Reasoning
Expressive language

APRIL

APRIL

CLASSIFICATION

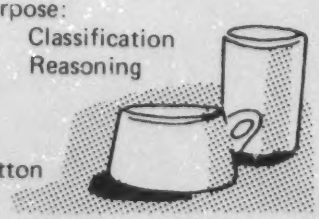
Shared attributes. Materials: Various materials such as:

cup
glass
red doll's dress
pair of blue doll's pants
toothbrush
hair clip
some real cherries
poker chips
yellow plastic square
blue plastic square
green pencil
pen
red crayon
blue ball
green ball
safety pin
bobby pin
some real grapes
buttons

Let the children look at, handle, and talk about the objects. The teacher begins the game by saying, "I'm going to find two things that are alike." She can pick up the cup and the glass and explain, "These are alike because you can drink from them." After each child has had a turn (all answers are accepted), the teacher on her second turn can group two items on a different basis. She might select the crayon and the doll's dress and say, "These are alike because they are both red." On her third turn, she might choose a ball and a bead and say, "These are alike because they are both round."

Letting the children determine their own criteria for classifying will be much more meaningful than asking them to find something red. Present several different items each time the game is played, so that the children don't memorize combinations, but must think through how the objects may be related.

Purpose:
Classification
Reasoning



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TEXTURES

Tactile cards. Materials: 2 sets of 2"x4" cards covered with fabric—satin, velvet, corduroy, cotton, silk, pique, terrycloth, suede—all the same color.

Let the child feel the textures on one set of cards.

Then ask him to match the two sets of cards using vision and touch.

Ask the child to close his eyes or blindfold him if he's willing, and have him try to match the two sets of cards using only touch.

FARMER

Action Song. (Sung to tune of "Farmer in the Dell")

Have the children form a circle with two or three children in the center as "seeds."

The farmer sows the seeds
Hi, ho the derry-o
The farmer sows the seeds
(Circle children do appropriate motion, while inner children are first tiny seeds, then grow.)
The sun begins to shine . . . . .

The rain begins to fall . . . . . .

The seeds begin to grow . . . . .

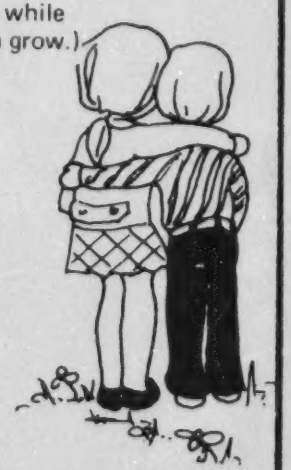
They grow up straight and tall . . . . .

The farmer cuts them down . . . . . .

He takes them to the barn . . . . . .

The farmer's work is done . . . . . .

We all jump for joy.



The seeds rejoin the circle and other children take their place.

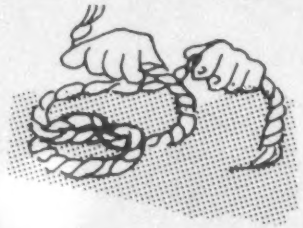
HINDU ROPE TRICKS

By providing special movement activities for the shoulders, arm and hand control will be refined and this in turn will enhance fine motor control of the fingers.

Materials: A 3' length of rope for each child.

Have the children hold the rope in their right hands and twirl the rope like a lariat making big circles in the air in front of the body and off to the right side. Then switch the rope to the left hand, twirl in front and to the left side.

Demonstrate on the floor how to make a knot in the rope. Help the children who cannot do this. Have the children tie the rope to the rung of a chair and a table leg.



Show the children how to coil a rope, and have them pick it up by the middle. Then show them how to transfer the coiled rope from one hand to another without letting it come apart. If they can do that, ask them to hold the coiled rope in the right hand, put it behind their backs and transfer it to the left hand. Then reverse the direction. This is a difficult task.

Then ask them to choose a partner and try to tie their ropes together.

Purpose:
- Body image
- Spatial relationships
- Following directions
- Fine motor control

GO-TOGETHERS

There is a hierarchy of learning which requires that first the child must perceive (see, hear, feel, etc.) then discriminate (see likenesses and differences), associate (see relationships), assimilate (make the knowledge part of himself and available when he wants to use it), transfer and generalize the knowledge to new situations (apply what he knows to solve new problems).

Word game. Play a word association game with the class. Name an item and have the children respond with a "go together" word.

table—chair	comb—brush
knife—fork	cake—ice cream
shoe—sock	hat—coat

Which is different? The children need to learn to perceive significant differences, however, it is important to avoid visual discrimination exercises that require a child to find minor differentiating details.

Materials: Pictures

Collect pictures of animals and objects. Mount three that go together and one that doesn't on a piece of construction paper. Have the children put a marker on the one that should not be there.

Give the children the opportunity to tell you why their choice does not belong.

Individual activity

Purpose:
- Visual association
- Reasoning

APRIL

00073

APRIL

SAND AND WATER PLAY

Children are just naturally drawn to sand and water and much constructive learning takes place as they play. Fine motor development and eye-hand coordination are fostered through pouring and filling activities using different shaped and sized containers. The children will gain a better grasp of the relationships needed to understand number concepts such as bigger, smaller, more and less. The relationships of parts to a whole will be discovered as they cut a sand pie into quarters. Sand and water play is an emotional safety valve, too, releasing pent-up tensions and it is such fun!

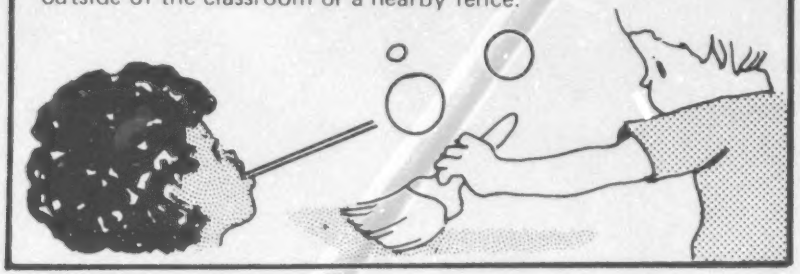
Water Play. Provide all kinds of measuring spoons, cups, and containers, pitchers, sprinklers, squeeze bottles, funnels and strainers for the children to pour from, dunk, splash, measure and float for free play.

Soap Bubbles. Materials: Joy liquid detergent
Paper cups
Straws

Blowing soap bubbles need not be an outdoor activity, however, the bubbles gleam in rainbow colors in the sun and a gentle breeze will float them away.

Add one teaspoon of Joy to ¼ cup of water for each child's paper cup. Give them a straw to dip and they will blow millions of shiny bubbles.

Water Painting. Give the children large paint brushes and buckets of water. They may clean the blackboard where exciting color changes appear and then evaporate away, or paint the outside of the classroom or a nearby fence.



SAND AND WATER PLAY

Cleaning. Let the children have the fun of seeing the chemical change that takes place when a copper bottomed pot is shined with metal polish.

Let the children scrub their tables or the mirror with Bon Ami using a sponge and a circular motion left to right.

Have them mop up spills with a sponge or a mop.

Sink or float. Make cork sailboats using a nail for a mast. Give a child a magnet and he will soon learn to guide the boat by manipulating the magnet near it.

Prepare a box of interesting objects some of which will float and some that will sink: toy boats, corks, marbles, wooden blocks, an empty juice can, a full can, sponge, Ivory soap, etc. Let the children experiment for themselves.

Make a square pan from a sheet of aluminum foil by turning up the four edges. It will float in the water and small objects may be placed in it. Crumple the pan into a ball and it will sink to the bottom. Have the children try to figure out why.

Sand Play. All of the measuring equipment and containers listed for water play may be used with sand. Flour sifters, and dump trucks may also be used.

For variety, use trays of salt, cornmeal, rice, or beans. Children like a change of materials and they will enjoy filling containers with these ingredients too.

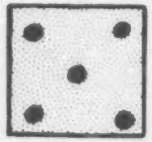
Purpose:
Relationships
Number concepts
Fun
Emotional release

PEG BOARDS

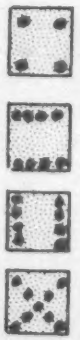
Pegboards come in many sizes with pegs in various diameters. Success should be ensured at each step before a pegboard of the next higher complexity is introduced. If the child can't work with pegboard patterns, let him pound pegs in a pounding board until he is ready.

Materials: Pegboards and pegs
Pegboard patterns

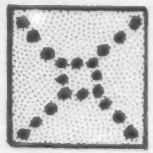
Start the child off with a 5-hole pegboard. When he can manipulate the pegs in that, present a 25-hole board.



Using pegs of just one color, ask the child to put pegs in the corner holes, then in all the holes across the top from left to right, from top to bottom. Clear the board and ask him to make diagonal lines from corner to corner. The teacher should demonstrate the requests with a pegboard so that the child can copy her board. Then see if he can do it following oral directions alone.



Then and only then is the child ready to copy pegboard pattern and design cards using several colors of pegs. Start with patterns for 25-hole boards and then present patterns for 100-hole boards.



Individual activity

Purpose:
Visual motor coordination

OUT FOR A WALK

It takes many, many experiences to develop concepts and to stimulate language. The children need exciting things to talk about.

A stepping walk. Have the children pace themselves so as to step on or avoid the cracks in the sidewalk. To vary this, have the children step on their own shadows and then try to catch someone else's shadow with his feet.

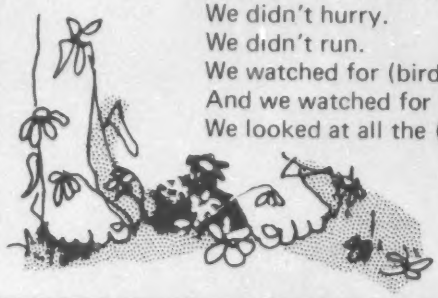
A tippy-toe walk. Take a walk in bare feet and let the children experience walking on cool cement, rough rocks, wet grass, a scratchy door mat, smooth carpeting, warm sand, slippery tile, etc.

A listening walk. The children will enjoy discussing the birds, lawn mower, car, grasshopper, bees, voices, and other sounds that they have heard.

A shape walk. Have the children look for circles one day, squares another day, and then for rectangles.

An insect walk. In the fall, before the leaves have fallen, it is exciting to search for bugs in the grass, on the underside of the leaves of bushes, on flowers and under rocks.

The variations are infinite, a green walk, a counting walk, a rock walk, etc.



Taking a walk was so much fun.
We didn't hurry.
We didn't run.
We watched for (birds).
And we watched for (bees).
We looked at all the (budding trees).

Purpose:
Observation
Science concepts

APRIL

APRIL

SANDPAPER BLOCKS

All learning requires that the child detect the differences in the things he experiences. Auditory and visual discrimination practice is often a part of preschool curriculum but the ability to discriminate by touch is often overlooked.

Materials: Two matching sets of 5 sandpaper blocks or cards made from various grades of sandpaper.

Give the child three pairs of sandpaper cards (the finest, coarsest, and middle grade) mixed together. Have the child find the matching pairs using vision and touch.

If he can do that with no difficulty, let him try it with the sets of five sandpaper cards which will call for finer discriminations.

Ask the child to put one set of cards in sequence from finest to coarsest grade. (You may want to ask him to "Put the roughest on this side.")

Increase the difficulty level even further by having the child do the above tasks using only touch. Put the cards in a box that has holes cut in either end for his hands so that he cannot see what he is doing.

Individual activity

Purpose:
Tactile discrimination

STORY TIME

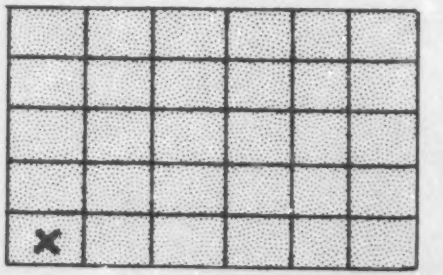
Tell, in your own words, the story of Lentil by Robert McCloskey. Use a real lemon and a harmonica for props to make the story come to life. Give each child a slice of lemon to pucker his lips.

WHICH WAY?

If spatial orientation is faulty, the child will need many experiences involving space, size, distance and direction.

Make a game of following oral direction. "Can you take two steps?" "Now, two more steps." "Can you take three steps forward?" "Turn around and take one step back." etc.

Materials: Oilcloth grid - 48"x72"
Set of arrow pattern cards



Put strips of plastic tape on the oilcloth to form the grid. Tape an X in the lower left corner for the starting square. Children take turns drawing a pattern card from the pack. The cards indicate the number of moves and the direction of the move they are to make.

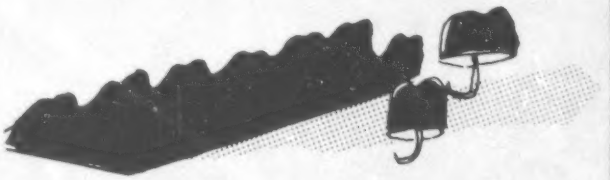
At first, the teacher will read aloud the directions and assist the child to step off the pattern on the grid. Eventually, the children will be able to read the pattern and execute it without help.

Purpose:
Following directions
Directionality
Number concepts

RAIN

Song. To the tune of "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf." This song is guaranteed to brighten up a rainy day.

Who's afraid of a rainy day, rainy day, rainy day?
Who's afraid of a rainy day? No, no, no, not I.
I wear my hat on a rainy day, rainy day, rainy day.
I wear my hat on a rainy day, that's how I stay dry.
I wear my boots – raincoat – I carry my umbrella, etc.



Umbrellas. Materials: Egg cartons
Pipe cleaners

Have the children make umbrella pictures. Cut enough cardboard egg carton cups in half to give each child two or three. Have the children paint the egg cups in bright colors, glue them at random to paper, and add pipe cleaner handles.

Game. Materials: An umbrella

This is a fun game to play in the spring. One child leaves the room. While he is gone, another hides under an umbrella and the rest of the children exchange places. When the missing child returns, he tries to guess which child is under the umbrella while the class sings to the tune of "Frere Jacques."

"Who is missing? Who is missing? Do you know? Do you know?"

The "it" child sings:
"Is it_____ ? Is it _____ ? Is it_____ ?"

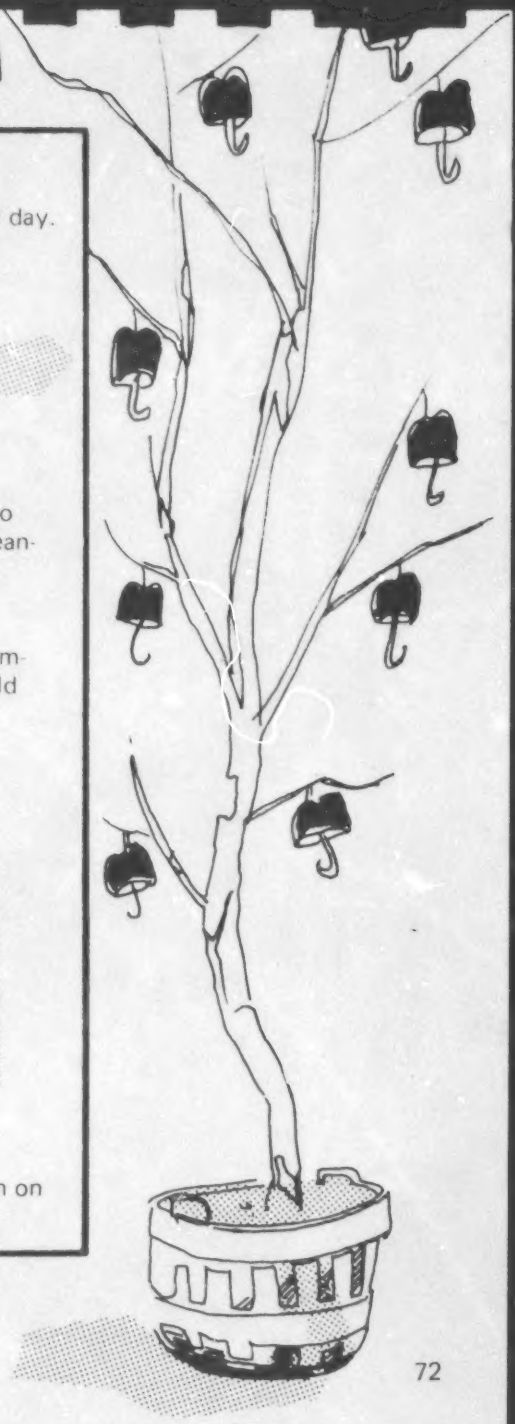
If he names the correct child, the class sings:
"You are right. You are right You are right."

If he doesn't name the correct child, the class sings:
"Guess again. Guess again. Guess again."

The children take turns hiding under the umbrella.

Purpose:
Visual memory

Book. Read Rain Drop Splash by Alvin Tresselt. This fascinating story of a raindrop would be a nice addition on a rainy day.



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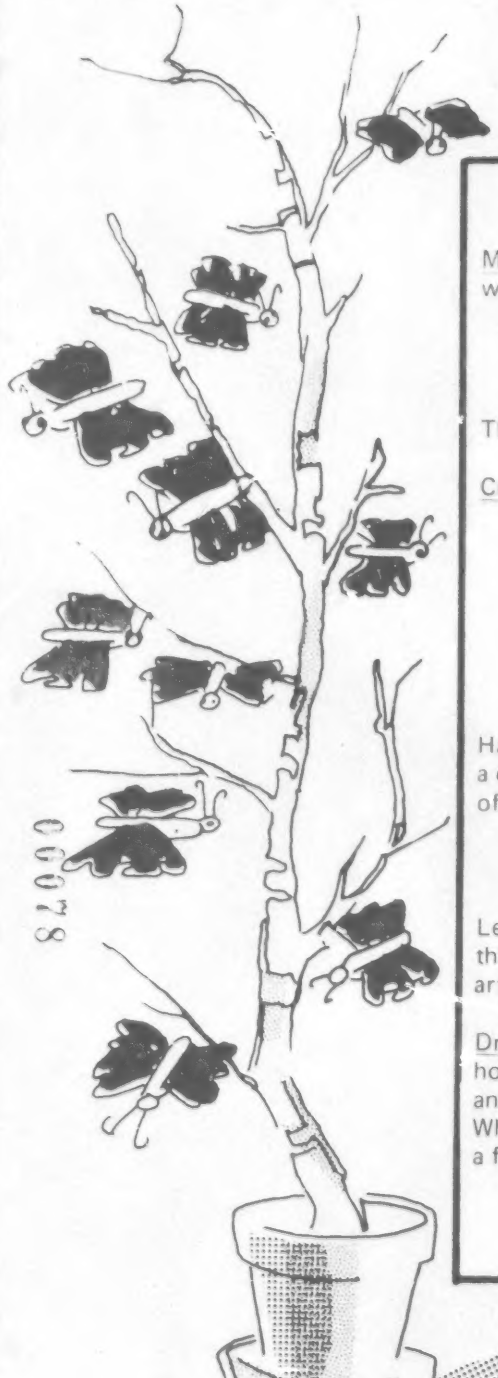


MAY

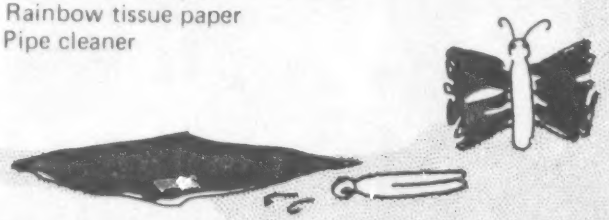
MAY BASKETS

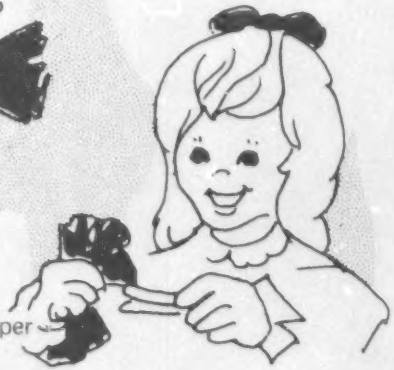
May Baskets. The children may make May Baskets from ½-pint milk cartons with the tops removed. Cover them with construction or contact paper. Add a yarn handle and fill with flowers (real or paper.)

BUTTERFLIES

The children will enjoy trying to catch butterflies. A special net is not necessary; kitchen sieves work well.

Craft Project. Materials: Wooden clothespin
Rainbow tissue paper
Pipe cleaner





Have the children insert several layers of 8" square rainbow tissue paper into a clothespin. Add pipe cleaner feelers and two magic Marker eyes to the head of the clothespin. These butterflies are fragile looking and beautiful.

Materials: Pre-cut butterfly shapes of white construction paper
Colored plastic spoons
Several colors of paint in squeeze bottles

Let the children put dabs of several colors of paint on one side of the butterfly. Fold over the other side and have the children rub the folded paper. When the butterfly is opened, each child will have his own beautiful work of art. Glue the plastic spoon to the butterfly to serve as its body.

Dramatization. Divide the class into flowers and butterflies. The flowers hold their hands up and the butterflies hold them out. Play spring music as the children dance around the room. When the music stops, the butterflies and the flowers must stop where they are. If a butterfly can reach out and touch a flower, the flower sits down. When the music starts again the remaining children are divided into the two groups and play until there are just a few children left.

Purpose:
Impulse control
Imagery

WILD ANIMALS

Read some stories to the children about zoo and circus animals. Discuss the features that are distinctive to each, the elephant's trunk, tusks, and size, the giraffe's long neck, etc. Ask, "Where would you look for _____'s home—on the ground, underground, in water, in a tree, etc.?" Talk about the ways the animals protect themselves, the skunk's odor, the turtle's shell, the bear's claws, and the kinds of things they like to eat.

Art. To make a lion's head, cut a yellow circle from a 3" square and an orange circle from a 4" square. Have the children fringe the orange circle by cutting about 1" deep, and then paste the the small yellow circle on the larger circle. Draw on the features. To make the body, fold a 6"x8" piece of yellow construction paper in half and cut an arch in the center of the open long edge. For the tail, cut a 1"x7" strip of yellow paper. Fringe one end and fold the strip lengthwise. Glue the tail inside the fold and attach the head at the other end. This delightful three-dimensional lion will stand up.

To make an elephant, the body is the same, but cut from gray paper. For the head, make circles out of three 4" squares of of gray paper. Shape two of the circles for ears and paste them on the other circle.

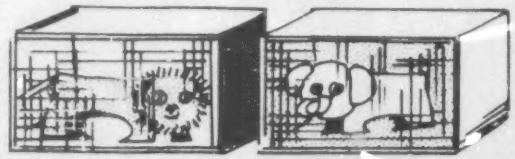
Wind a 1"x5" strip of paper around a pencil to make the curling trunk. Fold it in half lengthwise and shape a point at one end. Glue the tail into the fold of the body and attach the head.. Draw on the eyes and then add the trunk.

Adapted from © The Child Begins to Know His World (Educational Research Council, Cleveland, Ohio). Used with permission.

62009

WILD ANIMALS

Put the animals in a child's shoe box, resting on its side. Pieces of netting cut from onion or potato sacks are then glued over the open side of the box to make a perfect cage for wild animals.



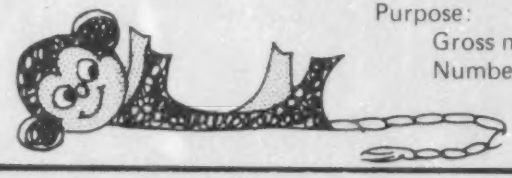
Dramatization. Take the children on an imaginary lion hunt; trudge through the mud, walk through the tall grass, climb hills, swim across a river, stalk, creep, run, and when you spot the lion, turn around fast and scurry home to safety.

Purpose:
- Imagery
- Gross motor control

Song. Chant or sing "Five Little Monkeys." It is a sure favorite.

Give each child a number, 1 through 5. On the first verse, all the children jump. At the end of the first verse the number 5 children fall down while the other monkeys keep on jumping. Number 4 children fall on the next verse and so on until at the end of the last verse, there are no more jumping monkeys.

Five little monkeys jumping on the bed,
One fell down and cracked his head.
Mama called the doctor and the doctor said.
"No more monkeys jumping on the bed."
(Repeat with 4, 3, 2, and 1 monkey.)



Purpose:
- Gross motor control
- Number concepts

MAY

PROBLEM SOLVING

Growth toward independent thinking begins early in life and the preschool classroom can provide many opportunities to encourage independent thought and action. Problem solving involves a willingness to try out a new idea based on some past experience.

Materials: Flannel board
Cut out felt figures, or
Construction paper scenes

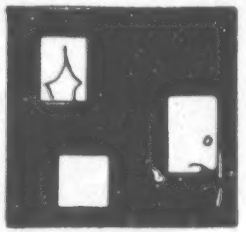


Fig. 1

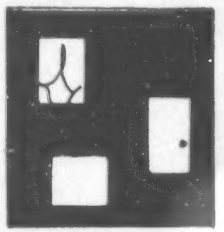


Fig. 2

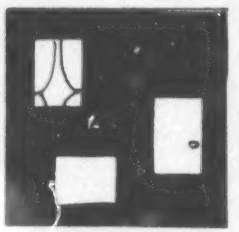


Fig. 3

From felt, cut a door, a window, an open box, and a dog. (If no flannel board is available, cut and glue all paper objects except dog to construction paper background.) Make slits in the door, window, and the box for the dog to slip into.

Show the scene as in Figure #1. Then out of sight of the children, place the dog part way in a slit so that only part of it shows as in Figure #2. Then, out of sight of the children, push the dog in so that nothing can be seen as in Figure #2. Ask, "Where is the dog?" Repeat several times putting the dog in different positions. Emphasize the prepositions through the door, in the box, out the window.

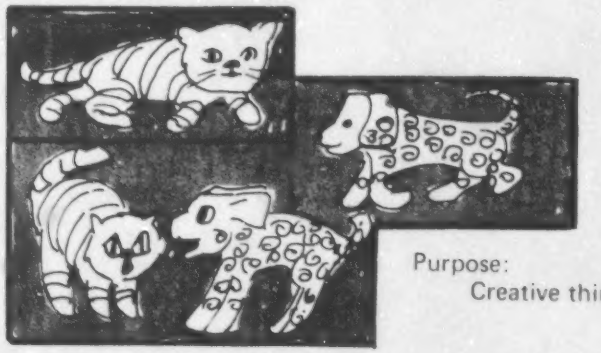
Small group activity

Purpose:
Reasoning
Visual memory

PROBLEM SOLVING

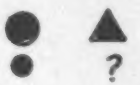
Place a box of objects too heavy to lift on one side of the room. Ask the children to think of ways to move them. Give each child a chance to make a suggestion and the opportunity to try out his idea. Each new idea should be praised and accepted.

Collect pictures of problem situations. Ask the children, "What do you think happened next?" or "What would you do next?" Accept all ideas or suggestions for solutions to encourage creative thinking.

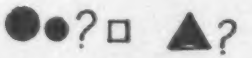


Purpose:
Creative thinking

The children may use a set of wooden attribute blocks to complete patterns such as these.

a. 

b.

c. 

d.

Individual activity

Purpose:
Problem solving
Reasoning

PROBLEM SOLVING

Materials: A set of 10 pairs of objects such as keys and key chains, or cowboys and horses.

Give the child six keys and three key chains. Ask him if there are enough chains for all the keys. If the child says, "Yes," ask him to put the keys on the chains. If he says, "No," offer him the box containing the rest of the keys and chains and let him take what he needs to put the keys on the chains. The child may solve the problem by placing two keys on each chain. This is not an incorrect solution. Value it!

Play the game giving the child 5 chains and 3 keys. Ask if there are just enough chains. Let the child make his own decision and choose what he thinks he needs.

Another day give him 7 cowboys and 5 horses. In the box, put 2 extra cowboys but no horses. Ask if there are enough horses for all the cowboys. Encourage him to test his answer. If the child says he needs more horses, offer him the box. When he sees there are no more horses, ask him what he can do so that there will be just enough cowboys but not too many.

We want the child to think of placing two cowboys back in the box, or put two cowboys on each horse. If he leaves the extra cowboys on the table, accept it. Later, present the problem again with different materials.

Adapted from Walton, Logical Mathematical Thinking and the Pre-School Classroom.

Individual activity

Purpose:
Number concepts
Reasoning
Creative thinking

SHADES

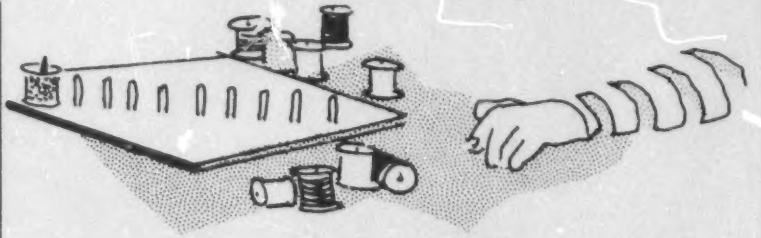
The children must know their colors very well before they are challenged with ordering them.

Yarn. Materials: 10 strands of yarn, different shades of of one color
Peg board and ten pegs

Start with five shades of one color and ask the child to loop the strands over the pegs in sequence starting with the lightest color and working toward the right to the darkest color.

Increase the difficulty by adding more shades of yarn and more colors.

Thread. Materials: 10 spools of thread ranging in color from palest pink to dark wine red
Pegboard and ten pegs



The spools will fit over the pegs. Ask the child to sequence the the colors from the lightest at the top left corner to the darkest at the bottom right.

Paint Chips. The paint sample color cards available wherever paint is sold are ideal for this activity. You may want to mount them on cardboard for easier handling.

Individual activity

Purpose:
Visual discrimination

00081

MAY

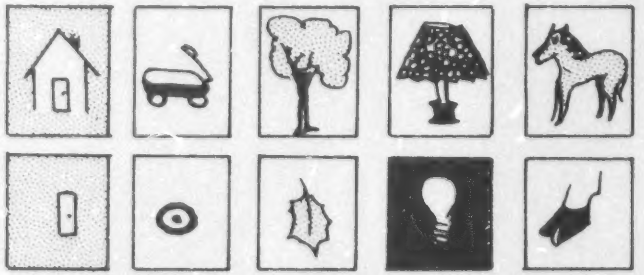
RELATIONSHIPS

As objects are perceived and manipulated by the child they acquire meaning (hats are to wear, a wagon is to pull or put things in). The child should be able to recognize concrete objects before being asked to identify pictures of objects. He must also discover the relationships between facts, ideas, and objects before he is asked to deal with the symbolic representation of the written words.

Materials: Picture cards

Comparisons: Prepare two sets of picture cards with pictures of such things as a small and a tall tree, a short and a long pencil, a thin and a fat man, a tiny chair and an overstuffed chair, a Pekinese and a Great Dane dog, a house and an office building, a thin book and a thick book, an apple and a bowl of apples. Have the child sort into pairs. Discuss the pictures with him using comparative adjectives.

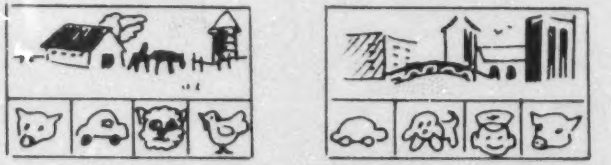
Part to whole. Prepare two sets of pictures and ask the child to match the part to the whole.



Go Together. Have the child match a picture of a knife to a a fork, a chair to a table, cup to a saucer, sock to a shoe, ice cream to cake. Arrange pictures of a nest, a barn, a dog house, a tepee, an igloo, a garage, a hangar, and a house on the table. Then have the child match pictures of a bird, a cow, a dog, an Indian, an Eskimo, a car, an airplane, and a family.

RELATIONSHIPS

What doesn't belong? Prepare 8"x10" laminated cards with a picture on the top half and four smaller pictures on the bottom.



Ask the child to cross out the one that doesn't belong. (A washable felt tip pen or wipe-off crayon works well.)

Individual activity

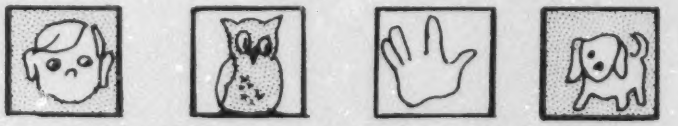
Purpose:
Concept development
Visual association
Relationships

What's missing?

People. Arrange three children in a row. After all the children have seen the order, one child hides his eyes and one child takes another's place in the row. The "it" child must name the child who is missing. More children can be lined up in the row to increase the difficulty level as competence increases.

Objects. The same game can be played with objects lined up on a table or with pictures of objects. Out of sight, remove one object and ask, "What is missing?" Gradually, increase the number of objects used.

Pictures. Cut pictures of objects and people from magazines omitting an important feature. Mount the pictures and have them laminated. Ask a child to either point to, draw in, or tell you what is missing.



Individual activity

Purpose:
Visual memory

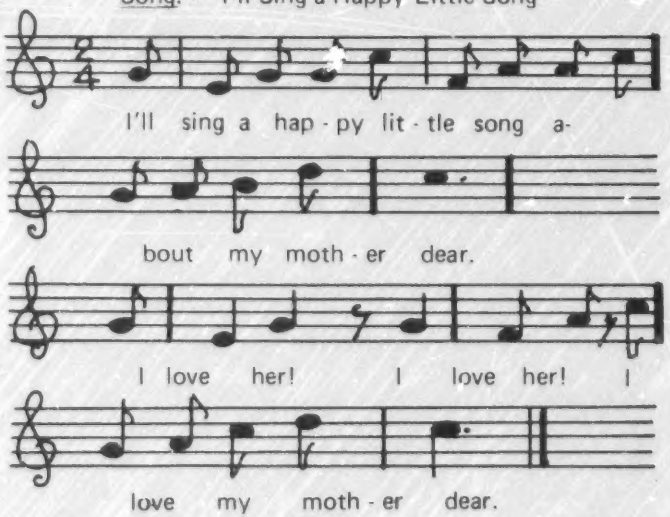
MOTHER'S DAY

A Helping Hand. Materials: Detergent
5" diameter foil dishes
(frozen meat pot pie tins)

Have the children make a "Helping Hand" for their mothers. Add four parts detergent to one part water in a mixing bowl. Have the children take turns beating the mixture with a rotary egg beater until it is thick and foamy. Add more detergent if needed. Make two holes 1½" apart at the edge of the foil pan and tie a ribbon through the holes. Let the children spread the suds ¾" thick in the bottom of the pan. Press the child's hand into the suds. Paint when dry.

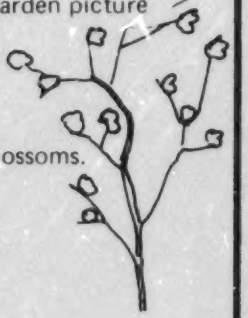
Purpose:
Social development
Self concept

Song. "I'll Sing a Happy Little Song"



FLOWERS

Popcorn will color beautifully if it is cooked without salt and oil and then shaken in a paperbag with powdered tempera. The colored popcorn can be used as flowers in a garden picture



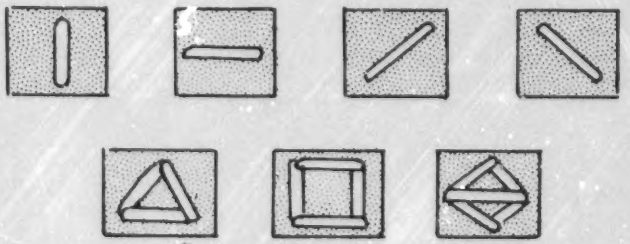
or glued to the branches of a tree for spring blossoms.

STICK PATTERNS

Materials: Colored popsickle sticks
Laminated stick pattern cards

Ask the child to reproduce the pattern, first by putting the popsickle sticks on top of the stick pattern design, and then to reproduce it along side the design.

When the child can do that easily, show him a pattern card. Let him study it and then reproduce the pattern from memory. Start with simple designs using one stick in various positions and progress to more complex patterns using several sticks of different colors.



Individual activity

Purpose:
Visual memory
Visual motor coordination

68003

MAY

AUDITORY PERCEPTION

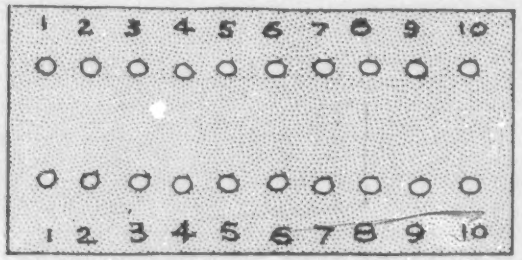
Auditory discrimination of contrasting sounds must be mastered before a child can differentiate between the more subtle sounds of speech such as pen, pin, pit, fit, etc.

High and Low.

Materials: A pitch pipe, piano, or a toy xylophone

The teacher strikes a note on the music maker and follows it with one an octave higher or lower. When the second note is higher, the children stand on tip toes and reach up high. When the second note is lower, the children crouch to the floor.

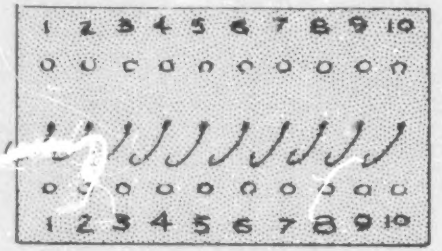
Materials: Music maker (see above)
Cards



Prepare a sheet of paper for each child with numerals 1-10 at top and bottom of the sheet and two rows of circles in the center. As the teacher plays a high or low note, the child responds by coloring the correct circle starting with Number 1. When ten tones have been recorded, the child can connect the colored circles, dot to dot fashion from left to right and the teacher may easily check for correct responses. The children may be asked to read their papers from left to right. "High, high, low, etc."

AUDITORY PERCEPTION

Another variation of this activity requires a higher level of fine motor skill. Prepare cards similar to the above without the circles, but punch a hole beneath each numeral in the top row and above each numeral in the bottom row. Thread a knotted 5-inch piece of plastic lacing (or shoe lace) from the back to the front of the card for each numeral to form a middle row.



As the teacher plays a tone on the musical instrument, the children record the tone starting at Number 1. If the tone is high, the children put the lace in the top hole. If the tone is low, the children put the lace in the bottom hole. The same procedure is followed for ten tones. The child's laced pattern may be quickly checked for accuracy, the level of difficulty may be raised by sounding tones closer together on the musical scale.

Purpose:
Auditory discrimination
Left–right progression
Number concepts

STORY TIME

Read Blueberries for Sal by Robert McCloskey. Give each child an empty can and a pile of blue beads. As you read the story, the children pick the blueberries (the blue beads) and drop them "kerplunk" into the pail. Afterwards, have a blueberry party with real berries to feel and taste.

00084

BIRDS

Birds on a Wire. Materials: Clothesline
Construction paper
Clothespins

Draw a life sized pattern of several types of bird outlines. Let each child select the bird he wants to make. Draw two identical outlines of his bird for him to color and cut out. Then have him glue the cut-outs to each side of a clothespin, matching heads and tails. Clip the finished bird to a clothesline.

Poem.

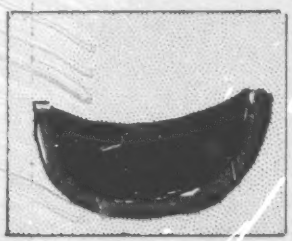
I saw a little robin, come hop, hop, hop.
I said, "Little Robin, will you stop, stop, stop?"
I opened the window to say, "How do you do?"
But he shook his little tail and away he flew.

Nests. Materials: Newspapers
Wallpaper paste
Blue play dough or clay

Shred the newspapers in a paper cutter. Mix the shredded paper with wallpaper paste. Work it with the fingers until it is a smooth pliable mass.

Let the children shape wads of the paper-paste mixture into nest shapes. Paint the nest brown and while the paint is still wet sprinkle on bits of dried grass or straw. When dry, add bright blue eggs shaped from clay.

WATERMELON FUN

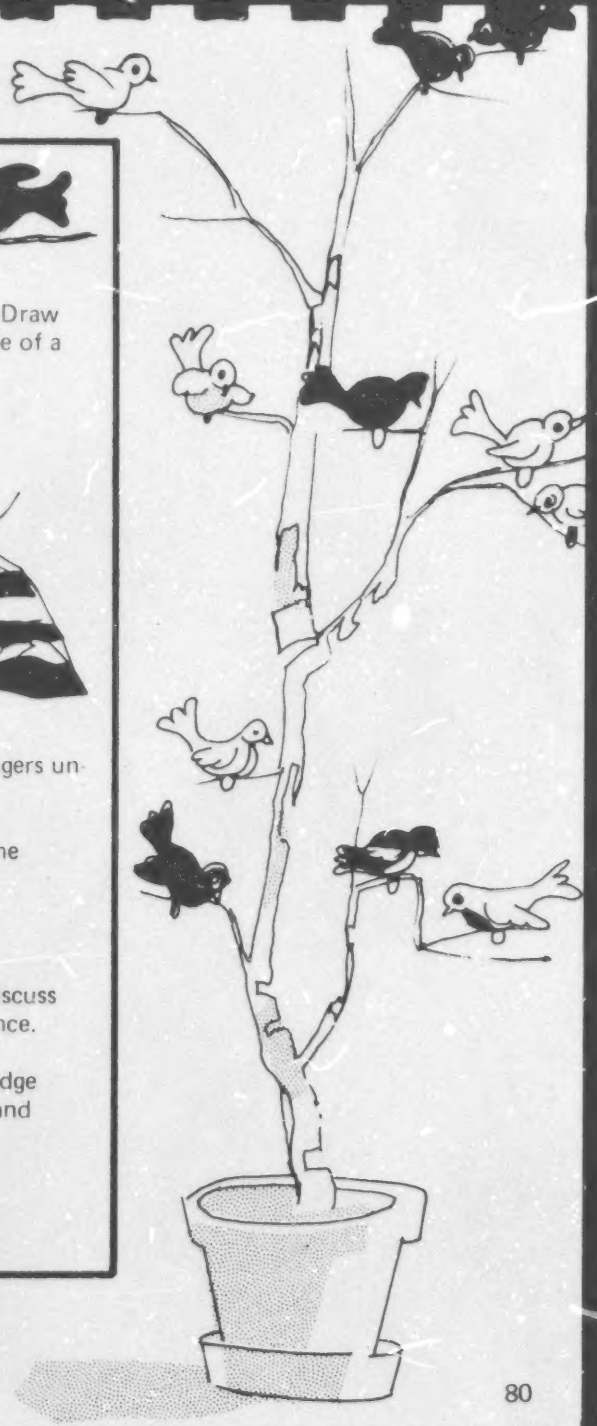


Bring a watermelon to class. Let the children thump it, feel how heavy it is, discuss the texture and color of the skin, then slice it for a memorable eating experience.

Cut a wedge of pink paper for each child. Have the children paste the pink wedge on white construction paper, color a dark green rind around the pink wedge, and glue on the real watermelon seeds.

HAVE A GOOD SUMMER!

Purpose:
Fun



MAY

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Archer, Peter. GOLDEN CIRCUS, Simon & Schuster Co.
Baker, Betty. LITTLE RUNNER OF THE LONGHOUSE, Harper & Row Co.
Bason, Lillian. PICK A RAINCOAT, PICK A WHISTLE, Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co.
Berkley, Ethel S. BIG AND LITTLE UP AND DOWN, Young Scott Books Co.
Birmingham, John. SEASONS, Bobbs Merrill Publishing Co.
Bridwell, Norman. THE WITCH NEXT DOOR, Scholastic Book Services Co.
Brown, Margaret Wise. GOODNIGHT MOON, Harper & Row Co.
Burton, Virginia Lee. MIKE MULLIGAN AND HIS STEAM SHOVEL, Houghton Mifflin Co.
Ciardi, John. I MET A MAN, Houghton Mifflin Co.
Cohen, Mirian. WILL I HAVE A FRIEND?, Harper & Row Co.
Ets, Marie Hall. GILBERTO AND THE WIND, The Viking Press Co.
Fern, Eugene. PEPITO'S STORY, Ariel Books Co.
Flack, Marjorie. ANGUS AND THE CAT, Doubleday & Co., Inc.
Flack, Marjorie. PING, The Viking Press Co.
Friskey, Margaret. INDIAN TWO FEET AND HIS EAGLE FEATHER, Children's Press Co.
Hader, Berta & Elmer. STORY OF PANCHO AND THE BULL WITH THE CROOKED TAIL, Macmillan Co.
Hoban, Russell. BEST FRIENDS FOR FRANCES, Harper & Row Co.
Hoban, Russell. BREAD AND JAM FOR FRANCES, Harper & Row Co.
Keats, Ezra Jack. JENNIE'S HAT, Harper & Row Co.
Keats, Ezra Jack. MY DOG IS LOST, Thomas Y. Crowell Co.
Keats, Ezra Jack. THE NAUGHTY BOY, Viking Press Co.
Keats, Ezra Jack. THE SNOWY DAY, Viking Press Co.
Keats, Ezra Jack. WHISTLE FOR WILLIE, Viking Press Co.
Leaf, Munro. THE STORY OF FERDINAND, Viking Press Co.
Marino, Dorothy. BUZZY BEAR'S BUSY DAY, Franklin Watts, Inc.
Marino, Dorothy. BUZZY BEAR'S WINTER PARTY, Franklin Watts, Inc.
McCloskey, Robert. LENTIL, Viking Press Co.
Mitchel, Edna. TEMPER TANTRUM, Preston-Viking Co.
Morrow, Elizabeth. THE PAINTED PIG, Knopf Co.
Rey, H.A. CURIOUS GEORGE (and other in series), Houghton Mifflin Co.
Scott, Ann Herbert. SAM, McGraw-Hill Book Co.
Thayer, Jane. ANDY WOULDN'T TALK, William Morrow & Co.
Thomas, Patricia. "STAND BACK" SAID THE ELEPHANT, "I'M GOING TO SNEEZE!" Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co.
Tresselt, Alvin. RAIN DROP SPLASH, Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co.
Udry, Janice May. LET'S BE ENEMIES, Harper & Row Co.
Ward, Lynd. THE BIGGEST BEAR, Houghton Mifflin Co.
Whitney, Alma M. JUST AWFUL, Addison-Wesley Co.
Whitney, Alma M. LEAVE HERBERT ALONE, Addison-Wesley Co.
Wise, Margaret. THE NOISY BOOK, Harper & Row Co.
Zolotow, Charlotte. MY FRIEND JOHN, Harper & Row Co.
Zolotow, Charlotte. SOMEDAY, Harper & Row Co.
Zolotow, Charlotte. THE HATING BOOK, Harper & Row Co.

RECOMMENDED RECORDS

ADVENTURES IN RHYTHM with Ella Jenkins, Folkway Records
AND ONE AND TWO with Ella Jenkins, Folkway Records
CARPET SQUARES, A.B. LeCrone Co.
COLOR ME A RAINBOW, A.B. LeCrone Co.
COUNTING GAMES AND RHYTHMS FOR THE LITTLE ONES with Ella Jenkins, Folkway Records
CREATIVE MOVEMENT AND RHYTHMIC EXPLORATION, Hap Palmer, Educational Activities, Inc.
DANCE-A-STORY ABOUT BALLOONS, with book, RCA Victor
DANCE-A-STORY ABOUT FLAPPY AND FLOPPY, with book, RCA Victor
DANCE-A-STORY ABOUT LITTLE DUCK, with book, RCA Victor
GETTING TO KNOW MYSELF, Hap Palmer, Educational Activities, Inc.
HEALTH AND SAFETY, Hap Palmer, Educational Activities, Inc.
HOKEY POKEY, A.B. LeCrone Co.
HOORAY! TODAY IS YOUR BIRTHDAY, Tom Glazer, Young People's Records
IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS, Hap Palmer, Educational Activities, Inc.
LEARNING AS WE PLAY, Folkway Records
LEARNING BASIC SKILLS THROUGH MUSIC, Volume I, II and III, Hap Palmer, Educational Activities, Inc.
LITTLE TOOT, Told by Don Wilson, Capitol Records
ME, MYSELF, AND I and NOTHING TO DO, Young People's Record Guild
MUFFIN IN THE CITY, Young People's Records, Inc.
MUFFIN IN THE COUNTRY, Young People's Records, Inc.
MY PLAYFUL SCARF, Young People's Record Guild
RAINDROPS, A.B. LeCrone Co.
SONGS IN MOTION: FINE MOTOR ACTIVITIES, Educational Activities, Inc.
SONGS IN MOTION: GROSS MOTOR ACTIVITIES, Educational Activities, Inc.
THIS IS RHYTHM, with Ella Jenkins, Folkway Records

28000

RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR TEACHERS

Braley, W.T., Komicki, G. and Leedy, C. DAILY SENSORI-MOTOR TRAINING ACTIVITIES: A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN, Freeport, N.Y.: Educational Activities, Inc.

Findlay, Jane et al. A PLANNING GUIDE TO THE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM, Chapel Hill Training--Outreach Project

Fraiberg, S. THE MAGIC YEARS: UNDERSTANDING AND HANDLING THE PROBLEMS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD, Charles Scribners Sons

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GLOSSARY

Auditory Discrimination is the ability to know the difference between sounds heard.

Auditory Memory is the ability to recall what has been heard, including the order of sounds within words.

Auditory Perception includes the ability to understand sounds or spoken words and to make meaning of them.

Body Image is the child's awareness that his body has size, shape and is capable of movement.

Classification is the ability to recognize likenesses and differences between objects and to group them accordingly.

Concept Development is the formation of mental images gained from experience.

Discrimination is the ability to note differences in color, taste, texture, size, smell, shape, or amount.

Fine Motor Control occurs when the small muscles of the hands and fingers are sufficiently developed to enable the child to control them. This control is needed for cutting and writing.

Gross Motor Control occurs when the larger muscles are developed sufficiently for the child to control movement when walking, running, jumping and standing.

Gustatory Awareness occurs when a child realizes that different foods have different tastes.

Imagery is the formation of mental pictures based on remembered information received through the senses.

Impulse Control is the ability to regulate ones own actions.

Language Development is the basis of communication skills. It entails the ability to gain meaning from connected words and to express a thought in words understandable to others.

Left-Right Progression is the direction of eye and hand movement used in our system of reading and writing.

Midline is an imaginary line which divides the body into right and left halves. For example, a child must be able to cross the midline when using his right hand to pick up an object to his left.

Motor Planning involves the child's ability to consciously move muscles to accomplish a goal.

Number Concepts are beginning ideas of quantity and measurement.

Olfactory Awareness occurs when a child realizes that different things have different smells.

Perception is the process of interpreting information received through hearing, vision, taste, smell, and touch.

Self-Concept is a child's opinion of his own appearance, self-worth and ability.

Sequencing is the arrangement of one thing after another in logical order.

Social Development is dependent upon a positive self-concept which enhances relationships with children and adults. This also includes self-control and the assuming of responsibility.

Spatial Relationship is the ability to judge two or more objects in relation to each other or to one's self.

Tactile Awareness occurs when a child realizes that things feel different to the touch

Visual Discrimination is the ability to see differences.

Visual Memory is the ability to recall information gained through sight.

Visual Motor Coordination is the ability to perform tasks which require the use of eyes and muscles working together at the same time.

Visual Tracking is following movement with the eyes.

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